

D'AMBROSIO
architecture + urbanism

2960 Jutland Road
Victoria, BC, Canada, V8T5K2
tel 250.384.2400
eml mail@fdarc.ca
web www.fdarcc.ca

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6
Attn: Mayor and Council

July 16th 2019

Re: Development Permit with Variance Application for the Speed / Frances Redevelopment

We are pleased to submit, on behalf of Mike Geric Construction and in collaboration with Aryze Developments Inc., this letter and the enclosed documents that form part of the application for Development Permit with Variances for the properties at 605-629 Speed Avenue and 606-618 Frances Avenue. This exciting proposal will introduce 247 new homes to the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood and will feature progressive contemporary architecture and high-quality integrated site redevelopment.

Project Summary The Proposal consists of two multi-family residential buildings over one level of underground parking. The East Building, located at 615 Speed Avenue, will be a 6-storey wood-framed building containing 68 units. The West Building, located at 605 Speed Avenue, will be a 14-storey mass timber building containing 179 market condominium units. These construction systems have been selected for their environmental benefits as well as for their structural advantages. In order to meet the seismic requirements of the 2018 BC Building Code for this particular site, wood-based structural systems are more efficient and economical, thereby contributing to cost control and housing affordability.

Site Design & Landscape Architecture The site has been conceived holistically as a fine-grained ground plane that integrates landscaped areas, private patios, pedestrian paths, vehicle lanes and parking for bicycles and cars. The main site frontage on Speed Avenue has been designed to retain and complement the beautiful London Plane trees that form the character of this neighbourhood street. Both the East & West Buildings have main entrances on Speed Avenue, and the frontage is further activated by the arbor entrances and patios for the East Building's ground-oriented units. Between the two buildings, a through-block lane connects Speed and Frances Avenues and functions as an informal local street, complete with sidewalks, boulevard plantings and entrances to the ground-oriented residential units.

Plant material proposed for the project will consist of hardy native and adaptive ornamental species of trees, shrubs and groundcovers. Planting areas have been designed to enhance the pedestrian experience by providing an overhead plane of tree canopies and a variety of understory shrub material. Pedestrian entry points to the buildings and patio spaces will be highlighted with plant material that will evoke visual interest and assist in wayfinding. Plant material selection will allow for surveillance and sightlines to public and private spaces. Attention to the scale the plant material and species selection will be undertaken to ensure the design will complement the form of the building architecture.

Planting and fencing around the perimeter of the site will create a green buffer to the neighbouring properties and tree planting will provide a larger scale landscape element to help define the property and visually soften the development.

Landscape irrigation for the project will consist of a water efficient underground system to help ensure establishment of the plant material as well as ongoing plant health and reducing future maintenance requirements.

Offsite treatment of the boulevard space along the Speed Avenue frontage has focused on preservation of the significant London Plane trees and grass boulevard. The Frances Avenue streetscape will be enhanced with new street tree planting and grass boulevards.

Building Architecture

The East and West Buildings are of different scales yet have a shared architectural expression. They are characterized by richly coloured brick-clad bases and luminous warm white facades. The massing of both buildings arises from the organization of residential units around a daylight double-loaded corridor. Lateral shifts along these corridors offset the ends of each building from each other, creating a vertical reveal at the corridor windows and proportioning the narrower building faces into elegant vertical facades. The longer and more visually dominant facades have a more horizontal expression, which is made dynamic through the arrangement of balconies (on the West Building) and angular frames (on the East Building). The contrasting colour of these building projections animates these facades, as will the interplay of shadows. The taller West Building is further articulated by the 8th floor horizontal reveal and a dramatic wood-lined canopy over the level 14 roof deck.

Proposed Variances

The proposal conforms to the R-81 Speed and Frances Multiple Dwelling District, with three proposed variances: building height, parking and entrance canopy setbacks.

Building Height

The R-81 Zone allows a building height of 37m, or approximately 12 residential storeys. This application includes a variance request to increase the allowable height - for the West Building only - to 45.5m. The additional 8.5m in height would accommodate the dropped and exposed wood beams characteristic of the mass-timber structural system being used. The resulting technically necessary height, also creates gracious 3m ceiling heights throughout the building as well as features that distinguish the architecture: the covered amenity roof deck at Level 14 and the building base of loft-style ground-oriented units (with mezzanine level bedrooms). As demonstrated by shadow studies, the impact of the additional building height has been mitigated by the building's slender footprint and its orientation perpendicular to the Speed Avenue frontage.

Parking

The provision of vehicle parking has been optimized in response to the characteristics of the site and the Developer's goal to provide affordable, entry-level residential units. The underground parking structure is restricted to a single level by very challenging site conditions, and that single level has been limited in area by the critical root-zone requirements of the Speed Avenue London Plane Trees. At the surface, space for

vehicles has been balanced with the pedestrian and landscape components that are necessary to a pleasant and appropriately scaled neighbourhood development. As a result of these factors, the application requests a parking reduction from 262 (per the R-81 Zone) to 166 stalls provided, (with an additional 2 stalls on-site for car share parking). For reference, the parking requirements for this Proposal per the current Schedule C are 220 stalls including visitor parking. The mitigation of the impacts of this parking variance are detailed in the included report by Bunt & Associates.

Building Entrance Canopies

The positioning of both the East and West Buildings conforms to the required setbacks of the R-81 Zone, and in consideration of the additional building height the North-facing façade of the West Building has been pulled an additional 2.6m away from the Speed Avenue frontage. In order to create a strong connection to Speed Avenue, the application proposes an entrance canopy for each building that extends to the front property line. These canopies provide sheltered protection to the sidewalk and, more importantly, make clearly visible these main entrances along the Speed Avenue streetscape.

Green Building Features

The building will incorporate sustainable building features as follows:

Rating System

While the building is not registered with Canadian Green Building Council, and not intended to apply to be LEED certified, the design team includes experienced, LEED accredited professionals, enabling environmental responsibility to be a natural priority throughout the design.

Site Selection

- i. Redevelopment of a brownfield site.
- ii. Site located in the Mayfair Town Centre, within walking distance of commercial and personal services and public transit.

Innovation and Design

- i. Multi-disciplinary, integrated design team.
- ii. Innovative use of mass timber high rise structure
- iii. Durable building & cladding materials

Transportation

- i. Service rough-in for electric vehicle charging stations
- ii. Provision of car share program membership and 2 car share vehicles, with parking accommodated on-site
- iii. At-grade bicycle storage in the 6-story East Building

Energy Efficiency / Renewable Energy

- i. Whole-building energy modelling to meet BC Energy Step Code requirements
- ii. Energy efficient building systems (HRVs)
- iii. Incorporate 'Energy Star' rated appliances.
- iv. Incorporate motion sensors in common area LED lighting to reduce energy consumption.
- v. Programmable thermostats.
- vi. Buildings are designed to manage solar heat gains:
 - High performance glazing
 - Balconies provide passive solar shading

Water

- i. Low flow plumbing fixtures and water efficient appliances will be specified.
- ii. Selection of native and adaptive planting and water efficient irrigation techniques (drip, rainwater catchment in planted areas and swales) to reduce demand on the city's water service.

Site Permeability

- i. Increase in open site space beyond zone requirements (14% minimum required, 24% provided)
- ii. Plantings and trees integrated into parking areas to provide shade and screening for residential uses and along shared property lines

Landscape Urban Forest / Urban Agriculture

- i. Retention of London Planes trees on Speed Ave.
- ii. Hardy native and adaptive ornamental species of trees, shrubs and groundcovers. Plant selections will help reduce water use and require less chemical maintenance.
- iii. High efficiency irrigation system – A water efficient irrigation system will be implemented to reduce water use. High efficiency irrigation features will include:
- iv. Rain sensor delay and evapotranspiration module.
- v. Water efficient nozzles.
- vi. Drip irrigation components.
- vii. Programmable "Smart Irrigation Controller".
- ix. Reduced Heat Island Effect – Deciduous tree planting will help reduce solar gain to paved areas during warm summer months and allow light and heat gain during the cooler winter months.

Materials & Resources

- i. Provision of facilities for storage & collection of recyclables & compost on site for residents.

In conclusion, the Owners and the design team have worked collaboratively to bring forward a design concept that will add 247 new homes into the Mayfair Town Centre, mainly constructed with a progressive heavy mass-timber system. In preparing this application, careful consideration has been given to the objectives of the City guidelines and thoughts expressed by the surrounding community. We look forward to working with staff through the Development Permit process and will be happy to provide additional information as needed.

Sincerely,



Franco D'Ambrosio, Architect AIBC MRAIC LEED AP
Principal
D'AMBROSIO architecture + urbanism



Erica H. Sangster, Architect AIBC MRAIC
Principal
D'AMBROSIO architecture + urbanism