

3.2 Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00115 for 605-629 Speed Avenue and 606-618 Frances Avenue

The City is considering a Development Permit with Variances Application to construct a 14-storey and a 6-storey multi-unit residential building.

Applicant meeting attendees:

FRANC D'AMBROSIO	D'AMBROSIO ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM
ERICA SANGSTER	D'AMBROSIO ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM
TERRY KOPECK	D'AMBROSIO ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM
MARK ZUPAN	D'AMBROSIO ARCHITECTURE + URBANISM
KEITH GRANT	KEITH N. GRANT
	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LTD.
GREG GILLESPIE	MIKE GERIC CONSTRUCTION
RYAN GOODMAN	ARYZE DEVELOPMENT
JUSTIN FILUK	ARYZE DEVELOPMENT

Leanne Taylor provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- height and building mass of the fourteen-storey building
- circular windows on the west elevation of the fourteen-storey building
- application of building materials.

Franc D'Ambrosio and Erica Sangster provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal, and Keith Grant provided details of the proposed landscape plan.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- why are Juliet balconies proposed on Speed Avenue, rather than full balconies?
 - this was a direction from the owner, due to how the smaller building will be marketed
 - Juliet balconies will not interfere with the London plane trees along Speed Avenue
- what is the clearance between the 14-storey tower and the existing industrial building to the west?
 - 6.8m
- how tall is the neighbouring industrial building to the west?
 - approximately 1.5 to 2 storeys tall
- what is proposed for the first level of the of the 14-storey building at the west?
 - patios and landscape screening is proposed
- how will the balcony boxes be drained to avoid dirt build-up on the surface?
 - this has been considered and adequate drainage is ensured
- what is the design intent behind the lack of curvature in the building design?
 - this has been discussed at length, and the current design highlights the clean lines and form of the building
 - there are curvilinear forms in the landscape design
- how is the entryway along Speed Avenue designed for minimal impact to the London plane trees along the street?
 - the tree canopy is quite tall in this area

- there is no underground parking at this location to protect the root zones
 - there has been much discussion to ensure that the trees are protected
- the 14-storey building has common area but the 6-storey building does not; was the 6-storey building's flat roof considered for use as amenity space?
 - this is not planned at the moment, but could be considered
- were options other than circular windows explored for breaking up the 14-storey building's massing?
 - the round windows add an element of whimsy
- do the applicants anticipate vehicular traffic cutting through the site from Douglas Street, and if so, how has this been mitigated?
 - it is impossible to get from Frances Avenue to Douglas Street without waiting for traffic, so this would never be a shorter route
 - the applicants have worked with the City's transportation staff to locate the parkade entrance
 - the vehicular traffic generated from the site will be managed with a signalized intersection
- is it an accurate statement that there are generally challenges with stepping back a timber-frame building, or are there challenges only in this particular context?
 - this is an accurate statement generally
 - the most significant challenge is in articulating the building's massing, while satisfying structural engineering requirements
 - the proposal can be seen as a prototype for using a timber-frame structure in the most efficient (and interesting) way possible
- what has been done to create a laneway rather than a parking lot?
 - the parking and landscaping layout ensures that there is never a 'shotgun' view of all the parked cars, and there are trees planted every three parking spaces to form a canopy
- is there a different surface material for the laneway?
 - yes
- the proposed 14-storey building would be significantly taller than any others in close proximity. What is the intent for this area?
 - Leanne Taylor noted that the current zoning allows for up to 12 storeys, consistent with the Official Community Plan and neighbourhood plan
 - there are no other applications at present for buildings of 12 storeys in this area, but the intent is for this area to grow with increased height as the Mayfair Town Centre
- is the only variance for height?
 - yes, and the proposal is under the allowable floor space ratio
- what is the rationale for the horizontal band across the east side of the 14-storey building?
 - the band divides the building into two horizontal, visually-digestible pieces, each higher than the average neighbouring building
 - the band will visually reduce the impact of the building face
- what is the design of the separate bicycle parking structure, and why isn't this simply a room within one of the main buildings?
 - there is a schematic drawing in the plans for this building
 - the bicycle parking will aesthetically match the pavilion at the other side of the property
- what cladding is proposed?
 - either high-quality cementitious or composite panel will be used

- if composite panel is used, how would it be joined?
 - the joints would be concealed
 - metal composites and fibre cement composites are also being considered
 - the material will be smooth, white, lustrous, high-quality and fire-rated material.

The Panel discussed:

- there being many examples of well-articulated timber-frame buildings that are stepped back; the need to be honest about technical requirements vs. feasibility
- appreciation for the buildings' strong, clean architectural expression
- the success of the entry canopy on Speed Avenue in bridging between the public and private realms
- recognition that these units will not be affordable
- appreciation for the architecture and materiality
- opportunity to reconsider the whimsical circular windows
- appreciation for the proposed landscaping, internal laneway and Speed Avenue street tree retention
- concern that the tree canopy in the laneway will not fill out as proposed
- the extreme, imposing height of the proposed 14-storey building; desire to see it reduced to 12 storeys for a better aesthetic and contextual fit
- the need to respect the 12-storey zoning for the site
- appreciation for the need for higher-density buildings outside the downtown core
- opportunity to redistribute the density between the 14- and 6-storey buildings to reduce the taller building's height
- the 6-storey building's appropriate scale and the protection of the tree canopy
- the danger of setting a precedent for much taller buildings along Speed Avenue
- if the building were reduced to 12 storeys, it would still fulfill the policy goals of revitalization and would add a landmark and a sense of place
- the need for accessibility given the increased density on a site with challenging access.

Motion:

It was moved by Elizabeth Balderston, seconded by Pamela Madoff, that the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00115 for 605-629 Speed Avenue and 606-618 Frances Avenue be approved with the following change:

- that the project comply with the height limit as prescribed within the zone.

Carried (6:1)

For: Elizabeth Balderston, Sorin Birliga, Brad Forth, Pamela Madoff, Karen Sander, Stefan Schulson

Opposed: Jason Niles