



## Advisory Design Panel Report

### For the Meeting of October 23, 2019

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**To:** Advisory Design Panel **Date:** October 11, 2019

**From:** Rob Bateman, Senior Process Planner

**Subject:** Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00079 for 1010 Fort Street

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) is requested to review a Development Permit with Variances Application for 1010 Fort Street and provide advice to Council.

The proposal is to construct a 12-storey, mixed-use building with ground-floor retail and purpose-built rental residential above, including approximately 55 dwelling units. The overall proposed density is 5.37:1 floor space ratio. Variances related to parking are also proposed as part of the Development Permit Application. There is also a concurrent Rezoning Application.

Staff consider that the proposal is generally consistent with the use, density and height envisioned in the *Official Community Plan* and *Downtown Core Area Plan*, however, it does not meet the objectives of Development Permit Area 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage.

The proposal is also not consistent with the applicable Design Guidelines outlined in the Development Permit Area. Staff are looking for commentary from the Advisory Design Panel with regard to:

- building separation distances
- relationship to the street
- cohesion with the heritage corridor
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

The Options section of this report provides guidance on possible recommendations that the Panel may make, or use as a basis to modify, in providing advice on this application.

### BACKGROUND

**Applicant:** Adam Cooper  
NVision Properties

**Architect:** W. Neil Robertson, Architect AIBC, MRAIC, AIA  
Stuart Howard Architects Inc.

**Development Permit Area:** Development Permit Area 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage

**Heritage Status:** N/A

### **Description of Proposal**

The proposal is to construct a 12-storey, mixed-use building with approximately 55 rental dwelling units above one commercial retail unit (approximately 78m<sup>2</sup> floor area) on the ground floor. The overall proposed density is 5.37:1 floor space ratio. The building would have a maximum height of approximately 40m. Concurrent with this application is Rezoning Application No. 00643, and variances related to parking are also proposed as part of the Development Permit Application.

The proposal includes the following major design components:

- seven parking spaces
- secure bicycle parking for 90 bikes (long term) located on the main floor behind the retail units
- publicly accessible bike parking for 7 bikes (short term) located near the entrance to the commercial unit
- communal amenity space on level 10, including a rooftop deck with hard and soft landscaping.

Exterior building materials include:

- metal, brick and stucco cladding
- standing seam metal
- glass guards
- curtain wall glazing
- vinyl frame glazing
- wood sun screen with metal frame.

Landscaping elements at ground level include:

- linear concrete unit pavers
- precast concrete rainwater planters
- ornamental plantings
- one small tree.

Landscaping elements on levels two, three, and five private outdoor space include:

- unit paving
- prefabricated planters with trailing plants
- small trees.

Landscaping elements on the level ten amenity deck include:

- unit pavers
- view bar
- planter with tree and layered shrubs
- post system for string light canopy.

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing CA-42 Zone, Harris Green Commercial District. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the existing Zone.

Several aspects such as the height, parking layout, and building street frontage may not be entirely accurate and will need to be confirmed with more information from the applicant. The applicant has indicated that the design of the building will not be affected.

<b>Zoning Criteria</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Zone Standard CA-42 Zone</b>
Site area (m <sup>2</sup> ) – minimum	628.30	N/A
Lot width (m) – minimum	18.41	N/A
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	<b>5.37:1 *</b>	2.50:1
Total floor area (m <sup>2</sup> ) – maximum	3390.90	N/A
Height (m) – maximum	<b>39.12 *</b>	15.50
Storeys – maximum	<b>12 *</b>	4
Building street frontage – building access (%) – maximum	<b>35.00 *</b>	25.00
Building street frontage – use occupation (%) – minimum	<b>47.00 *</b>	75.00
<b>Setbacks (m) – minimum</b>		
Front Lot Line (south)	<b>0.00 *</b>	3.00
Rear (north)	0.00	N/A
Side (east)	0.35	N/A
Side (west)	0.00	N/A
Parking (CA-42 Zone) – minimum	7	0
<b>Parking (Schedule C) – minimum</b>		
Residential	<b>7 *</b>	30
Visitor	<b>0 *</b>	6
Commercial	<b>0 *</b>	2

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard CA-42 Zone
<b>Bicycle parking stalls – minimum</b>		
Long term	90	61
Short term	7	7

## Sustainability Features

As indicated in the applicant's letter dated July 8, 2019, the following sustainability features are associated with this application:

- overhangs for shading
- efficient use of durable and long-lasting building products
- contemporary heating and cooling systems
- high-performance envelope and glazing design.

## Consistency with Policies and Design Guidelines

### Official Community Plan

The subject site is designated Core Residential in the *Official Community Plan* (OCP, 2012), 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 OCP envisions three to five-storey building façades that define the street wall, with upper storeys set back above.

The OCP encourages the logical assembly of development sites to enable the best realization of development potential for the area. Given the existing context and development potential, land assembly with the adjacent properties is strongly encouraged for a building of this size. This approach would achieve a development more consistent with the policies in the OCP and Development Permit Area Design Guidelines, and would enable off-street parking to be more easily provided.

The main objectives of the Development Permit Area 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage that are relevant to this proposal are:

- to revitalize arterial and secondary arterial streets to strengthen commercial viability and improve the pedestrian experience along the corridors
- to conserve 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.

Staff consider that the proposal is generally consistent with the use, density and height envisioned in the OCP; however, it does not meet the objectives of the Development Permit Area.

## Downtown Core Area Plan

The subject site is designated Residential Mixed-Use District in the *Downtown Core Area Plan* (DCAP, 2011), which envisions multi-residential development up to a height of 45m. The base density for a mixed-use development is a floor space ratio of 3:1 and a maximum of 5.5:1.

Staff consider that the proposal is generally consistent with the use, density and height envisioned in the DCAP.

## Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The property is situated within Development Permit Area 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage and the following documents were considered in assessing this application:

- *Official Community Plan* (OCP, 2012)
- *Downtown Core Area Plan* (2011)
- *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings* (1981)
- *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters* (2010)
- *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*
- *City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines* (1981).

The Design Guidelines in the DCAP are intended to revitalize the Fort Street corridor through high quality architecture, landscape and urban design while enhancing the heritage value, special character and the significant historic buildings, features and characteristics of this area. Staff consider that the proposal is not consistent with the Design Guidelines.

## **ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

The following sections identify and provide a brief analysis of the areas where the Panel is requested to provide commentary. The Panel is being asked to comment on the impacts and potential design solutions regarding building separation distances, relationship to the street and cohesion with the heritage corridor.

### **Building Separation Distances**

Staff have concerns that the limited setbacks at rear and sides to the tower would impact future development of adjacent properties, have impacts on shading and views to the open sky, and create a visual presence of a bulky upper building mass.

The following data table compares the proposal with the building separation guidelines in the DCAP. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the policy. As indicated in the table, levels 10 – 12 should have setbacks of 6.00m but the proposed setbacks are only 3.00m. It should also be noted that the proposal does not meet the required 3.5m setback to balconies on the sides of the building (they are less than 3m from the property line).

<b>Building Separation Guidelines for Residential</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>DCAP Policy (excluding the podium on the front half of the lot)</b>
<b>Setbacks</b> (m) – minimum		
Sides (east and west)		
Levels 2 – 4 (under 30m in height)	<b>0.35 * (east) 0.00 * (west)</b>	3.00
Levels 5 – 9 (under 30m in height)	3.00	3.00
Levels 10 – 12 (over 30m in height)	<b>3.00 *</b>	6.00
Rear (north)		
Levels 2 – 4 (under 30m in height)	4.87	3.00
Levels 5 – 9 (under 30m in height)	8.32	3.00
Levels 10 – 12 (over 30m in height)	8.32	6.00

### Relationship to the Street

As outlined in the design guidelines, new buildings should be designed to relate well to public streets and sidewalks. They should also have quality architectural materials and detailing in building bases and street walls.

Staff have concerns that the proposal does not respond well to the design guidelines, as follows:

- The design guidelines encourage building designs that incorporate massing, setbacks and building elements to reflect the building base, body and top. The lower storeys of the proposed building do not adequately ground the building with a solid base and do not create a defined street wall that is in keeping with the Fort Street context.
- The design guidelines encourage the proposed podium height and massing to consider street wall heights that are appropriate for the context of this street. The proposed podium height does not relate well to the existing low-rise buildings to the east.
- The design guidelines encourage articulation of building facades and rich detailing in order to provide a high degree of public interest along streets. A substantial portion of the frontage is dedicated to a pad-mounted transformer (PMT) and a parking garage access, which will detract from the experience at street level. Furthermore, it provides limited landscaping at street-level, which would create a hard edge.

### Cohesion with the Heritage Corridor

An objective of DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage, is to achieve a more cohesive design through high-quality architecture and urban design that is responsive to its historic context and conserves the special characteristics and heritage value of the area. Staff have concerns that the proposed development alters the spatial organization of the streetscape between Vancouver and Cook Streets and is incompatible in terms of size, scale and design. The proposal does not meet the objectives of the Development Permit Area related to the heritage corridor as it does not consider form, proportion, detailing and texture, particularly at the street level and at the podium, in relation to the historic context.

## **OPTIONS**

The following are three potential options that the Panel may consider using or modifying in formulating a recommendation to Council:

### **Option One**

That the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00079 for 1010 Fort Street be approved as presented.

### **Option Two**

That the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00079 for 1010 Fort Street be approved with the following changes:

- as listed by the ADP.

### **Option Three**

That the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit Application No. 00079 for 1010 Fort Street does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and policies and should be declined (and that the key areas that should be revised include:)

- as listed by the ADP, if there is further advice on how the application could be improved.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Subject Map
- Aerial Map
- Plans date stamped October 9, 2019
- Applicant's letter dated July 8, 2019.

cc: Adam Cooper, Applicant; W. Neil Robertson, Architect.