



## Committee of the Whole Report

### For the Meeting of June 11, 2020

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** May 21, 2020

**From:** Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development

**Subject:** **Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application No. 00236 for 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street**

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### RECOMMENDATION

That Council, after giving notice and allowing an opportunity for public comment at a meeting of Council, and after the Public Hearing for Rezoning Application No. 00701, if it is approved, consider the following motion:

“That Council authorize the issuance of Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application No. 00236 for 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street, in accordance with:

1. Plans date stamped October 22, 2019.
2. The Conservation Plan for the Caire and Grancini Warehouse at 1314 Wharf Street, date stamped October 22, 2019.
3. The Conservation Plan for the Fraser Warehouse at 1316-1318 Wharf Street, date stamped October 22, 2019.
4. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements, except for the following variances:
  - a) Reduce the required short term bicycle parking spaces from 10 to 0; and
  - b) Increase the maximum permitted height from 8 metres to 19.25 metres.
5. Final plans to be generally in accordance with the plans identified above, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.
6. The applicant provide details regarding their intended process for commissioning a story wall for the north elevation of the building, including an artist selection process, scope and content, and an explanation for how their project will consider the Indigenous cultural heritage of the waterfront public realm, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.
7. The applicant providing a lighting plan for the heritage buildings, to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.
8. Heritage Alteration Permit lapsing two years from the date of this resolution.”

## LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Sections 617 and 618 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Heritage Alteration Permit which may be subject to terms consistent with the purpose of the heritage protection of the property, including: (i) conditions respecting the sequencing and timing of construction, (ii) conditions respecting the character of the alteration or action to be authorized, including landscaping and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and structures and (iii) security. Council may refuse to issue a Heritage Alteration Permit for an action that, in the opinion of Council, would not be consistent with the purpose of the heritage protection of the property.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application for the property located at 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street. The application proposes the construction of a new mixed-use building at a height of five storeys along Wharf Street, and incorporates the rehabilitated exterior walls of two heritage-designated former warehouse buildings. The proposal requires a Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances and Rezoning.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- the heritage-designated Caire and Grancini warehouse (c. 1860) and the Fraser Warehouse (c. 1864), often referred to as the “Northern Junk” Buildings, are among the oldest buildings in Victoria and in the province
- the buildings have been vacant and unused since 1978, a period of 42 years
- none of the proposals to re-develop the site since 1999 have been successful, including multiple versions that rehabilitated the heritage buildings without a vertical addition
- the proposal, which includes a four-storey addition to the heritage buildings and a density increase, is consistent with some aspects of the redevelopment strategy for the site described in the *Victoria Harbour Plan* (2001), which encourages the revitalization of the heritage buildings, improved public access and open space at the bridge head
- the proposed rooftop addition is inconsistent with sections of the *Old Town Design Guidelines for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings* (2019) and *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* since the additions subordinate the heritage buildings within a much larger new development.

The application challenges many aspects of City policy pertaining to heritage conservation, which is reflected in the Heritage Advisory Panel’s recommendation that City Council decline the application. However, the opportunity to revitalize a vacant waterfront site and the proposal’s urban design and architectural qualities advance other City policies, which are factors that resulted in support from the Advisory Design Panel. In staff’s opinion, the proposed new architecture, urban design, waterfront path connection, heritage mural, and revitalization of this important and conspicuous gateway site advance key objectives of Development Permit Area 9 (HC) Inner Harbour in the Official Community Plan (OCP, 2012).

The scale, detailing and materials of the addition to the heritage warehouses respects and reinforces the character of the area, while being clearly derived from the heritage buildings themselves. The outer walls of each heritage building would be conserved in their entirety and rehabilitated, with interior features retained and exposed for visitors. The proposed evidence-based rehabilitation of the front facades is consistent with *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (*Standards and Guidelines*). On balance, the revitalization of a key site in the heart of Old Town will secure a future for a pair of long-vacant buildings. In staff’s opinion, this outweighs the proposal’s inconsistencies with existing policy.

## BACKGROUND

### Description of Proposal

The waterfront property at 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street is located at the west edge of Old Town, south of the Johnson Street Bridge on a dead-end branch of Wharf Street. The site is located across from Bridgehead Green, a triangular park formed by the curve of Johnson Street where it merges into the main branch of Wharf Street. The site slopes steeply downwards from the front to the back, descending over 3 metres to a plateau behind the warehouses. Beyond this plateau is a steep, rocky shoreline with the lot boundary extending into the water. The warehouse buildings are two storeys tall at the water and one storey tall on Wharf Street, and are separated from each other by 3.7 metres (12 feet). The Caire and Grancini Warehouse, the smaller of the two buildings, has an existing floor area of 324 square metres (3,487 square feet). The larger Fraser Warehouse has an existing floor area of 620 square metres (6,673 square feet).

Proposed is the construction of a new 47-unit residential rental building measuring five storeys (19.1m) tall along Wharf Street and six storeys (22.55m) tall on the waterfront, which would incorporate the rehabilitated exterior walls of the heritage-designated Fraser Warehouse and Caire and Grancini Warehouse. Commercial uses are proposed at the ground level in the warehouses. The development proposes extensive repairs to the exterior walls, rehabilitation and restoration of their front facades based on historic evidence, conservation of an interior brick demising wall on 1318 Wharf Street and revitalization of the site, which has been vacant for 42 years.

The proposal includes the following major design components:

- the use of contextually-sensitive cladding materials and compatible detailing on the upper storeys of the development, which respects and reinforces the Old Town context
- evidence-based rehabilitation of the front facades of the Caire and Grancini and Fraser Warehouses with the addition of glazed, multi-paned windows, cornices and historic signage
- restoration of Salt Spring Island sandstone, believed to be located beneath a layer of stucco on the front of the Fraser Warehouse
- enclosure of the majority of the Caire and Grancini Warehouse in a glass atrium, with the parapet, a chimney and a corbelled brick cornice removed and partly reconstructed at a lower height
- rehabilitation of the rear elevation of the Fraser Warehouse, including the removal of brick infill in window openings, installation of new window assemblies and reinstatement of doors at the ground floor
- reintroduction of a rear window to the rear elevation of the Caire and Grancini Warehouse and the installation of three new doors at the ground floor facing the waterfront
- new window and door openings in the conserved sidewalls of the warehouses for circulation and light
- no on-site parking
- construction of the Harbour Pathway along the property's waterfront frontage
- elevator access from the Wharf Street elevation to the Harbour Pathway elevation
- public access through a central alley that the applicant is proposing to name "Northern Junk Alley," located between the two existing Heritage buildings
- a mural art feature on the north wall.

Exterior building materials include:

- brick masonry on the rooftop additions
- terracotta masonry on the south five-storey addition
- dark metal panel cladding on the second through fourth storey central connecting element.

Landscaping elements include:

- stone paving on the west patio areas
- scored concrete on the east frontage and upper alley
- hydra pressed pavers on the rooftop top patio area
- sedum green roof on the four-storey rooftop addition.

## Data Table

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing IHH Zone, Inner Harbour Heritage District, and relative OCP Policy. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal does not meet the requirements of the existing Zone.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard IHH Zone	OCP Policy
Site area (m <sup>2</sup> ) – minimum	1,218	n/a	n/a
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	<b>3.39 *</b>	1.0	Up to 4:1
Total floor area (m <sup>2</sup> ) – maximum	4,128	n/a	n/a
Height (m) – maximum	<b>19.1 *</b>	8.00	n/a
Storeys – maximum	5 (6 perceived from the waterfront)	n/a	5
<b>Setbacks</b> (m) – minimum			
Front (Wharf Street)	0.00	0.00	
Rear (west - waterfront)	13.84	7.5	
Side (north)	0.00	0.00	
Side (south)	0.00	0.00	
Vehicle parking – minimum	0	n/a	n/a
<b>Bicycle parking</b> – minimum			
Long Term	69	60	
Short Term	<b>0 *</b>	9	

### **Description of Historic Place - 1314 Wharf Street “The Caire and Grancini Warehouse”**

The Caire and Grancini Warehouse is a narrow, two-storey brick and stone commercial warehouse built in 1860 during the development of Commercial Row in the Fraser River Gold Rush era. During this time, Victoria was a duty-free port and underwent its first significant phase of growth. Commercial Row was a hub for retail and commercial activity. The building is considered an integral part of the early harbour streetscape and is a tangible symbol of the early commercial development of the City at the gateway to Old Town.

The original owners of the building were Justinian Caire and Ermengildo Grancini, a pair of European immigrants who settled and started businesses in San Francisco. They commissioned the warehouse in order to open a branch of their shared company in Victoria. They sold iron, hardware, imported glassware and crockery. Architect John Wright designed the warehouse and it is a rare, surviving example of his work. Its dual-frontage design facing Wharf Street and the waterfront reflects the twin use of the structure for warehousing on the water side and commercial sales on the top floor facing Wharf Street. The scale of the facade facing the waterfront is considered to be a factor contributing to the building's heritage value. Character-defining elements for the building are listed in the attached statement of significance and include the appearance of the buildings as a free-standing structure and its modest scale.

### **Description of Historic Place - 1316-1318 Wharf Street “The Fraser Warehouse”**

The Fraser Warehouse is a one- to two-storey stone building that originally had symmetrical front and rear facades. It is internally divided with a brick demising wall reflecting its original use as a pair of stores. It was built in 1864 for Donald Fraser, who was an unofficial advisor to James Douglas. Donald Fraser was a member of the Vancouver Island Legislative Assembly and a successful land speculator. A significant local architect and contractor named Thomas Trounce designed the building to incorporate a variety of materials, including rubblestone foundations, dressed quoins, granite lintels and sandstone from Salt Spring Island for the front facade. The extensive use of stone in the building reflects the building traditions of the architect's former home in Cornwall, England.

Like the Caire and Grancini Warehouse, the Fraser Warehouse is considered an integral part of the early harbour streetscape and a tangible symbol of the early commercial development of the City. The scale of the facade facing the waterfront contributes to the building's heritage value. Character-defining elements for the building are listed in the attached statement of significance and include the appearance of the building as a free-standing structure and its modest scale.

### **Origin of the “Northern Junk” Name**

Northern Junk Co. Ltd. was a scrap metal recycling business run by the Kramer family. The business used the properties for storage from at least 1963 until 1978 when owner Allan Kramer passed away. The name Northern Junk Co. appears in stylized lettering on the upper portion of the facade.

The official Statements of Significance for the buildings omit the history of Northern Junk Co. and do not attribute any heritage value to the business' use of the properties for scrap metal storage.

### **ANALYSIS**

The following sections provide a summary of the application's consistency with the relevant City policies.

## Official Community Plan

The proposed development advances strategic objectives for the Inner Harbour Development Permit and Heritage Conservation Area without exceeding planned height limits or the maximum permitted density. The Official Community Plan (OCP, 2012) urban place designation for the property is “Core Inner Harbour / Legislative,” which permits new buildings with heights between one and five storeys. The OCP also allows for floor space ratios up to 4:1 in strategic locations throughout the area for the advancement of plan objectives. Applicable policies in the OCP are summarized below:

- conserve and enhance heritage value, character and special features of areas, districts, streetscapes and individual properties throughout the City
- maintain lower-scaled buildings along the waterfront adjacent to Wharf Street and support new development with form and character that contributes to and complements the skyline of the Core Historic Area
- encourage design that enhances the Harbour as a marine gateway
- continue to support new additions that conserve and enhance heritage property, consistent with the national Standards and Guidelines
- introduce new landmarks to enhance the visual identity and appearance of Victoria
- encourage urban design that is responsive to Victoria's geographic context and existing pattern of development, achieves excellence and creates memorable places
- promote sensitive and innovative responses to existing form and character.

The division of the proposed building into three distinctive volumes reflects the diversity of building widths and sizes along the waterfront and in Old Town. The use of terra cotta and brick cladding, punched windows and the proportion of wall to windows complements the prevailing character of Old Town. The development conserves and enhances the heritage character of much of the heritage-designated building facades by rehabilitating the waterfront and Wharf Street facades while enabling essential maintenance work to the sidewalls.

The large scale of the proposed rooftop additions, lack of step backs and subtle contrast between old and new construction makes it difficult for viewers to appreciate the original scale of the warehouses, which “contribute to the diversity of the City's historic shoreline as viewed from the Inner Harbour waterway” (see Statements of Significance). However, in staff's opinion, this impact is offset by the benefits of restoring commercial uses to a site after decades of vacancy, and the many enhancements to each of the facades. Staff are also recommending a lighting plan be provided for the buildings as a further enhancement. Architectural lighting would illuminate the heritage facades at night, turning them into a focal point and allowing viewers to see and appreciate the conserved buildings at their original scale.

The OCP includes this property in Development Permit Area 9 (HC): Inner Harbour. The key objectives of this designation are:

- a) To sustain the Working Harbour as defined and described in this plan through the revitalization of key waterfront and adjacent lands, including but not limited to Ship Point and locations along Wharf Street.
- b) To conserve the heritage value, special character and the significant historic buildings, features and characteristics in the Inner Harbour area.
- c) To enhance the Inner Harbour through high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects the area's functions as a marine entry, Working Harbour and community amenity in scale, massing and character while responding to its historic context...

The proposal would meet objective (a) by revitalizing a key waterfront site that is currently vacant. It would meet objective (c) by delivering high quality landscape and urban design features including the waterfront path extension and a pedestrian alley between the warehouses. To assess the proposal's consistency with objective (b), the following sections of the report include reviews of the *Downtown Core Area Plan* (2011), *Old Town Design Guidelines for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings* (2019), *Victoria Harbour Plan* (2001) and the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (2010).

## **Downtown Core Area Plan**

The development conserves most physical features of the heritage-designated buildings and the overall development is sensitive to the prevailing scale of Old Town. This reflects the Downtown Core Area's vision of a balance between sensitive new development and heritage conservation. While the scale of the additions exceeds what would normally be anticipated, the additional density is required to fund the rehabilitation and the construction of the harbour pathway and residential rental tenure.

The *Downtown Core Area Plan* (DCAP, 2011) includes the following relevant objectives for heritage conservation in the downtown:

1. Retain, protect and improve real property with aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual value and heritage character as a benefit to the public.
2. Development and heritage conservation are balanced through sensitive new infill and property additions that respond to the heritage value and character of Downtown Core Area Districts.

The DCAP contains the following relevant policies for the conservation of heritage properties and districts in the downtown:

- 7.3. Conserve heritage values of the Downtown Core Area and its character-defining elements, such as individual buildings, collections of buildings, streetscapes, structures and features
- 7.12. Maintain lower scale building forms along the waterfront adjacent to Store Street, Wharf Street, Government Street and Belleville Street, and in these locations support new development with form and character that enhances the heritage value of the Historic Commercial District
- 7.18. Support new development that conserves and enhances the form, character and features of heritage property and areas, where controlled and regulated in the Downtown Core Area

Viewed in the larger context of the Old Town District, it is a sensitive infill development. At five storeys, the height of the new development is lower than other nearby buildings on the waterfront including 409 Swift Street (six storeys), 1610 Store Street (six storeys) and 1234 Wharf Street (eight storeys), and maintains a lower scale of building form relative to recent examples. It has a compact width, which maintains views to the larger district. The new development conserves and enhances the heritage character and features of the warehouse buildings through repairs and conservation.

## Old Town Design Guidelines for New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings

The *Old Town Design Guidelines* (2019) are divided into two parts to address two types of development: new infill buildings and rooftop additions.

### Consistency with Guidelines for New Buildings

The proposed development is a rooftop addition to the heritage-designated warehouses. If it were a new building, the development would meet the applicable design guidelines for an infill building in the waterfront area. Its five-storey height and well-articulated massing achieves an appropriate mass, scale and siting (Section 5.1 - Building Mass, Scale and Siting). The use of structural bays, vertical proportions and regular punched window pattern create a visible street rhythm (Section 5.2 - Street Rhythm). Its facade includes a well-defined base, middle and top composition (Section 5.3 - Facade Composition), while the restored glazing at the front of the heritage-designated buildings creates a positive relationship to the street and adjacent open space (Section 5.4 - Relationship to Street and Open Space). The masonry and terracotta cladding are durable, high-quality choices that are common in Old Town (Section 5.5 - Materials and Finishes). The floor plans show residential units with large, operable windows and balconies ensuring adequate light and ventilation (Section 5.6 - Liveability).

### Consistency with Guidelines for Rooftop Additions

The proposal does not conform to a number of guidelines under the rooftop additions chapter. Chapter 3 - How to Use These Guidelines cite factors including land use, lot size, topography and overall complexity of the development as reasons why a development may not be able to fully comply with the guidelines. The following are unique site factors worthy of consideration:

- the small size and exposed setting of the heritage-designated buildings would make any addition a significant alteration to scale, form and massing
- the 42-year vacancy of a pair of heritage-designated buildings on an important waterfront site has created issues like vandalism, an interruption in the waterfront path system, and inactivity along Wharf Street
- the development is more complicated due to building rehabilitation and seismic upgrading requirements, which include removing partially collapsed floors in the buildings and the introduction of new mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems, among many other upgrades
- extending the David Foster waterfront pathway is a key policy objective that would be achieved through the rezoning.

The development is inconsistent with Section 6.3 of the guidelines on rooftop additions. The intent of Section 6.3 - Hierarchy is for new rooftop additions to be subordinate to historic buildings. The section envisions rooftop additions that are discrete and generally smaller in scale:

*A new rooftop addition should not compete with a historic building in size, scale or design, and should maintain the visual significance of the historic building within the streetscape. An addition that radically exceeds the size and scale of a historic building, or has a visually dominant design, undermines the heritage value of the building and district.*

Guidelines to achieve this include:

6.3.1 *Rooftop additions should be physically smaller in scale than the building they are connected to.*



*6.3.2 Rooftop additions located on buildings three storeys or less should be stepped back no less than 4m from the facade of the building that faces a street in order to reduce the impact of the additional building mass on the public street, improve sunlight access on the public street and better distinguish the form and scale of the original heritage building.*

In order to meet guideline 6.3.2, the proposal would have to provide a four-metre setback at both the waterfront and street facades of the heritage buildings and a single storey addition. This would result in a building addition of approximately 340m<sup>2</sup> (3,600 square feet) containing a maximum of four average size residential units. Such an addition would still be conspicuous without providing enough extra density to offset rehabilitation and harbour path costs. By not providing a step back to the addition, the applicant is able to achieve a more cohesive overall building design.

The proposal does not provide a notable physical separation between the addition and the top of the Caire and Grancini Warehouse. To accommodate the addition, the applicant is proposing to remove the side and waterfront parapets along the full length of the building, which means the scale of the warehouse will be artificially lowered. The Advisory Design Panel recommended that the proposal be revised to conserve the full side and waterfront parapets; however, because of construction challenges and the extent of the redesign that would be required, the applicant is unwilling to raise the addition up above the parapet.

The proposal meets some other applicable guidelines for rooftop additions. In particular, it achieves the intent of Section 6.1 - Meaningful Conservation and Enhancement since it proposes conservation of the majority of the historic buildings, except for their roofs, including conserving their interior configurations and an interior demising wall of the Fraser Warehouse. The proposal also restores missing original building features. The proposal achieves the intent of Section 6.2 - Compatibility through the use of relatively restrained detailing and a subdued colour scheme along with durable and textured materials. The development does not clearly achieve the intent of Section 6.4 - Distinguishability because of the similarity in materials and design between old and new construction.

## **Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

### Consistency with General Standards

The proposal is a rehabilitation project according to the *Standards and Guidelines*. Rehabilitation is defined as the sensitive adaptation of an historic place for a contemporary use while protecting its heritage value. The proposed rehabilitation includes the restoration of the Wharf Street facades, reanimation of the vacant buildings with new uses, and the enhancement of the side and rear elevations through maintenance and removal of graffiti.

The proposal would conserve and enhance many of the physical features of the warehouses while reanimating the buildings with commercial uses after 42-years of vacancy. The proposal would conserve the interior configurations and interior features of the warehouses, meaning the public could view them when visiting the ground floor businesses. Decades of slow deterioration, disuse and public avoidance has had a serious impact to the buildings' heritage value and character-defining elements, which include the use of the buildings for commercial purposes.

The following is a list of relevant general standards drawn from the larger list of fourteen standards, with staff commentary provided:

1. *Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable, character-defining elements. Do not move a part of an historic place if its current location is a character defining element.*

The proposed rehabilitation weakens an aspect of the buildings' heritage value, which is the contribution of their low scale waterfront facades to the diversity of the shoreline. The lack of step backs and contrast mean that the buildings no longer appear as free-standing, low-scale buildings. However, the restoration of commercial uses to the site, the supporting residential uses and the facade rehabilitation will improve the heritage value of the site by making the buildings part of the working waterfront once again.

3. *Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.*

The alterations to the scale of the heritage buildings are not consistent with a minimal intervention approach; however, the land lift analysis indicates that the proposal includes the minimum density required to offset seismic upgrading costs, rehabilitation costs and the Harbour Pathway, while still respecting OCP density limits. The cost to undertake the heritage rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of the walls is estimated at \$2,300,000 with the Harbour Pathway costing approximately \$500,000.

5. *Find a use for an historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character-defining elements.*

The proposed uses result in significant changes to the building's appearance as free-standing structures, which the applicant has stated is proportionate to the investment needed to rehabilitate the buildings, restore key features and deliver the waterfront path extension. The proposal also conserves and rehabilitates all other character-defining elements of the buildings including the exterior brick and stone walls, rubble stone foundations and window openings. The proposal also restores commercial uses to the site, which is listed as a character-defining element despite the site being vacant.

10. *Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to an historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.*

The facade designs of the new addition are compatible with the historic warehouses, although the height of the addition exceeds what the relevant design guidelines recommend. According to the heritage consultant, the new designs are derived from the original spacing of pilasters and windows on the front of the warehouses.

The lack of step backs from the heritage building facades to the rooftop additions combined with the subtle contrast in materials results in a significant alteration to the original scale of the warehouses. The additions are not subordinate in size. However, the design of the new additions is clearly derived from the heritage buildings and becomes a logical vertical extension of the originals. This is consistent with historic buildings like the Guild Building at 1250 Wharf Street, in which an original, low scale building established the design vocabulary for seamless larger additions and extensions. According to an explanation of standard 11 in the *Standards and Guidelines*, subordination is not a question of size, but whether the addition detracts from a historic place or impairs heritage value. The lack of separation, marginal setbacks and absence

of visual relief between the old and new construction does detract from the elements of heritage value that relate to the warehouse's original 1860's scale; however, the revitalization and reanimation of the site enhances the heritage value that resides in the historic commercial use of the site and the long history of pragmatic adaptation to evolving needs.

11. *Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of a historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.*

The walls of the original warehouses are proposed to be conserved *in situ* with new construction occurring within the walls. If the new work were ever dismantled, the form and integrity of the heritage buildings would survive.

### Consistency with Guidelines

#### *Exterior Form*

Section 4.3.1, which contains the guidelines for exterior form, recommend maintaining a building's historic proportions with any new addition and ensuring that heritage value is maintained. The new additions do not maintain the building's original proportions and there are no setbacks. The proposed removal of the parapet of 1314 Wharf Street and the proposed change in the building's historic proportions is not consistent with this guideline.

#### *New Windows and Doors*

The proposed new window and door openings on the north elevations of 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street and the south elevation of 1314 Wharf Street will enable the interiors to be successfully adapted to new commercial uses. This is in accordance with Guideline 20 of Section 4.3.5 - Windows, Doors and Storefronts, which allows for new windows and doors on non-character defining elevations in a manner that is compatible with the buildings' style, era and character.

#### *Conservation of Existing Masonry and Other Character-Defining Elements*

The Conservation Plan has carefully detailed an approach to conserving the existing masonry by replacing damaged and deteriorated masonry with reused masonry salvaged from the buildings. Other character-defining elements of the buildings, such as sandstone lintels and sills, decorative elements, brick chimneys, parapets and brick cornices, will be retained and restored, or replaced to match existing if they are beyond repair.

#### *Conservation of Existing Window and Door Openings*

All brick infilled window and door openings will be restored and rehabilitated in locations that follow the new design intent. The original timber windows are in very poor condition but will be recreated to match existing.

#### *New Windows*

Proposed new windows have been designed to be compatible with existing historic details and are in accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines*.

### **Victoria Harbour Plan**

The proposal is at the edge of the Bastion Site in the Inner Harbour Area of the *Victoria Harbour Plan* (2001). The proposed development is inconsistent with the recommended redevelopment

strategy for these buildings. The plan states that the City should consider applications to expand the site of the Northern Junk Buildings to the adjacent City-owned property and increase density up to 1.2:1 floor space ratio in order to promote their revitalization. Over the previous 10 years, the applicant explored multiple iterations of this strategy in which the Northern Junk Buildings were unaltered and a new building or buildings were located on the site to the north. However, these proposals did not come to fruition.

The current proposal advances other objectives of the plan, including developing the site as a lively, active, public area, encouraging amenities and completing path linkages from Ship Point to the north side of the Johnson Street Bridge.

### **Heritage Advisory Panel**

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel (HAPI) at its September 10, 2019 meeting (minutes attached). HAPI recommended that the application be declined for the following reasons:

- does not comply with the design guidelines for rooftop additions
- lack of distinguishability
- too high for this location
- massing is not subordinate to the existing heritage buildings.

The applicant has not revised the proposal to address these deficiencies because of inherent challenges of balancing the guidelines on the site, the uniqueness of the site, the public realm improvements they are offering, and the development otherwise meeting the guidelines for a new building in the *Old Town Design Guidelines*.

### **Advisory Design Panel**

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) reviewed this application at its September 25, 2019 meeting (minutes attached). The ADP recommended that Rezoning Application No. 00701 for 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street be approved with the following changes:

- consider maintaining the rooftop pediment of the Caire and Grancini warehouse by lifting the ceiling height of the ground floor addition above it
- consider increasing opportunities for individual, secure storage for residential units
- explore opportunities with the City for lay-by parking/drop-off, loading and off-site rideshare.

The applicant has not raised the ceiling height of the addition to conserve the full rooftop pediment of the Caire and Grancini Warehouse, and proposes to reconstruct it at a lower height instead. The applicant is unwilling to raise the addition up above the parapet because of challenges associated with construction.

### **Regulatory Considerations**

#### **Short Term Bicycle Parking**

The proposed variance to the short term bicycle parking requirement is the result of site constraints and challenges accommodating bike racks on the property. To overcome this, the applicant is willing to pay for the provision of bike racks off-site. The recommendation included in the concurrent Rezoning Application report contains the necessary language.

## Height

Staff recommend that the requested height above eight metres be handled as a variance so that the height is not expressed as a standard in the zone. This is to ensure that if this proposal is not constructed, the additional height will not become an entitlement and would require Council consideration and approval.

Moreover, staff consider the proposed height to be reasonable because the number of storeys does not exceed the recommended limit in the *Official Community Plan*. The increased height provides for an overall facade design that is consistent with the *Old Town Design Guidelines for New Buildings and Existing Buildings*, including a well-proportioned parapet. The development is not adjacent to any smaller heritage buildings and the extra height is in proportion to the wide right-of-way that it faces.

## Vehicle Parking & Loading

The small size of the site and the preservation of all four walls of the heritage buildings mean that there is no on-site vehicle parking included for the 47 rental units in the building and the commercial units. Like many other properties in Old Town, the existing Inner Harbour Heritage (IHH) Zone does not require parking currently. The Zoning Bylaw Amendment Application proposes to rezone the property from the IHH Zone, to the Old Town District 1 (OTD-1) Zone, with site specific provisions to allow no parking spaces. If the site were to adopt the OTD-1 zoning requirements, it would need 44 parking spaces.

The applicant prepared a Parking Variance and Access Review (attached), which justifies the absence of parking based on the building's geographic location in the most walkable, transit accessible area of the City near the center of its protected bike lane network. These location attributes, combined with the small unit sizes and proximity to the Bastion Square Parkade, located 180 metres away help justify the absence of on-site parking. The development includes 71 long term bicycle parking spaces, 66 of which are for tenants.

At this time, a road closure and turn-around design has not been confirmed and as such has not been indicated on the plans. City staff are advancing a design for this in-line with the planned road closure for this section of Wharf street.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

When applying heritage conservation policies to proposals, the City's goal is to support alterations that conserve the prominence of an historic building on its site and facilitate its continued use and appreciation by the public. When a heritage building has been consistently occupied, adding or changing uses as part of a redevelopment proposal does not have much influence on staff analysis. This is a rare case in which the heritage buildings have been vacant for almost two generations and have been the subject of a long series of stalled development proposals dating back to 2004. Although the proposal makes the heritage buildings far less prominent on the site, the long vacancy, unrelenting vandalism and slow deterioration of the buildings has a greater negative impact on the heritage value of the site in staff's opinion.

The proposed evidence-based rehabilitation of the heritage buildings is consistent with aspects of the *Standards and Guidelines*. The proposed new architecture, urban design, waterfront path connection and revitalization of this important and conspicuous gateway site advance key objectives of Development Permit Area 9 (HC): Inner Harbour in the OCP. The scale, detailing and materials of the addition to the heritage warehouses respects and reinforces the character

of Old Town, while being clearly derived from the heritage buildings themselves. The proposed alterations to the heritage buildings are inconsistent with some heritage conservation policies; however, the conspicuous location of the site, the prolonged vacancy, isolation and land use issues that it experiences make the site unique in Old Town and worthy of special consideration. Based on these findings, staff recommend that Council approve Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00236 for 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street.

### ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Heritage Alteration Permit with Variances Application No. 00236 for the property located at 1314 and 1318 Wharf Street.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John O'Reilly  
Senior Heritage Planner  
Development Services Division



  
Karen Hoese, Director  
Sustainable Planning and Community  
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date: June 4, 2020

### ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Plans, date stamped October 22, 2019
- Attachment D: Applicant's letter, dated October 22, 2019
- Attachment E: Heritage Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes dated September 10, 2019
- Attachment F: Advisory Design Panel Meeting Minutes dated September 25, 2019
- Attachment G: Photos of Building Interior and Exterior
- Attachment H: Conservation Plan – Caire and Grancini Warehouse, dated October 23, 2019
- Attachment I: Conservation Plan – Fraser Warehouse, dated October 23, 2019
- Attachment J: Statement of Significance – Caire and Grancini Warehouse
- Attachment K: Statement of Significance – Fraser Warehouse
- Attachment L: Third Party Economic Analysis Report, dated November 19, 2019
- Attachment M: Parking Variance and Access Review dated May 13, 2019
- Attachment N: Arborist Report, dated October 17, 2019
- Attachment O: Correspondence.