



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of January 21, 2021

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** January 7, 2021

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

Subject: Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00142 for 1125 Fort Street

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.00142, if it is approved, consider the following motion:

"That Council authorize the issuance of Development Permit with Variance Application No.00142 for 1125 Fort Street, in accordance with:

1. Plans date stamped September 9, 2020.
2. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements, except for the following variance:
 - i. reduce the vehicle parking from eight to four stalls, including a reduction of the visitor parking from one stall to zero stalls.
3. 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 *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 establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development, 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 with Variance Application for the property located at 1125 Fort Street. The proposal is to rezone the property from the R3-1 Zone, Multiple Dwelling District, to a new

site-specific zone in order to convert the existing building to two dwelling units and add three new residential units over parking within a new addition along Meares Street. The variance is to reduce the minimum number of vehicle parking stalls. There are also associated Rezoning and Heritage Designation applications that are presented in concurrent reports.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- the application is generally consistent with the Design Guidelines for Development Permit Area 7B(HC) – Corridors Heritage with regard to providing sensitive infill and human-scaled development that enhances the heritage character of the area
- the proposal is consistent with the *Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan*, 2019, which encourages more housing focused on the Fort Street corridor as well as the adaptive reuse of existing housing stock
- the location of the ground level enclosed parking and screened garbage/recycling area along Meares Street does not create active connection with the street; however the small size of the site limits opportunities to resolve this
- the parking variance is considered to be supportable given the site limitations and proximity to the Downtown Core, transit and bike network.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to rezone the property from the R3-1 Zone, Multiple Dwelling District to a new site-specific zone in order to convert the existing building into two dwelling units and add three dwelling units in a new addition to the rear. The proposal includes the following major design components:

- the existing building would be moved three metres toward Fort Street and most of the building would be conserved with limited alterations to the North, East and West elevations
- the predominant materials of the addition at Meares Street would be HardiePanel with glass balconies
- along Fort Street the upper levels would be brick cladding HardiePanel at the side entrance areas
- the fourth storey would be comprised of an outdoor amenity space
- the ground level parking would be accessed off Meares Street
- the garbage and recycling area would be located at Meares Street, with a stained cedar fence, screening the street.

The proposed variance is to reduce the vehicle parking from eight stalls to four stalls, this overall parking relaxation includes a reduction of the visitor parking requirement from one stall to no stalls.

Affordable Housing

The applicant proposes the creation of five new residential units which would increase the overall supply of housing in the area. A Housing Agreement is being proposed which would ensure that future Strata Bylaws could not prohibit the rental of units. A Housing Agreement is also being proposed to secure one unit within the existing building as rental for a period of 20 years.

Sustainability

The applicant has not identified any sustainability features associated with this proposal.

Active Transportation

The applicant has not identified any active transportation impacts associated with this application.

Public Realm

No public realm improvements beyond the City's standard requirements are proposed in association with this Development Permit application.

Accessibility

Accessibility measures beyond those contained in the British Columbia Building Code are not proposed.

Land Use Context

The area is characterized mainly by multi-unit residential buildings, with some commercial uses operating out of heritage houses along Fort Street.

Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The site presently contains a single family dwelling. Under the current R3-1 Multiple Dwelling District Zone, the property could be developed as a house conversion or multi-family dwelling; however, a multi-family dwelling would require a variance for the site area.

Data Table

The following data table compares the proposal with the R3-1 Multiple Dwelling District Zone. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal does not meet the standard expressed in the existing Zone.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Existing Zone
Site area (m ²) – minimum	420.6*	920.0
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	1.92*	1.20
Total floor area (m ²) – maximum	808	N/A
Lot width (m) – minimum	12.19	N/A
Height (m) – maximum	12.45	18.50
Storeys – maximum	4	N/A

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Existing Zone
Site coverage % – maximum	81*	30
Open site space % – minimum	16*	30
Setbacks (m) – minimum		
Front (North - Fort Street)	2.60*	10.50
Front Stair Projection	0.53	N/A
Rear (South - Meares Street)	1.74*	10.50
Side (East)	0*	7.22
Side (south)	0*	7.22
Parking – minimum	4*	8
Visitor parking included in the overall parking total – minimum	0	1
Bicycle parking stalls – minimum		
Long term	8	6
Short term	6	6

Community Consultation

Consistent with the *Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variance Applications*, the applicant has consulted the Fairfield Neighbourhood CALUC at a Community Meeting held on June 13, 2019. A letter dated June 13, 2019 is attached to this report.

ANALYSIS

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

The subject site is designated as Urban Residential in the *Official Community Plan, 2012* (OCP), which envisions low and mid-rise multi-unit buildings. The OCP also identifies the site within Development Permit Area 7B(HC) – Corridors Heritage, which supports high quality architecture, landscape and urban design that is human-scaled, responsive to its heritage context and helps to enhance the pedestrian experience along Fort Street. The design guidelines for this DPA, that are applicable to this site, are the *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings* and the *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters*.

These Design Guidelines encourage developments and infill that are sensitive to the existing context. Since this proposal conserves and designates the existing building, it is largely

consistent with the guidelines. The proposal includes a balcony on the east side of the existing building, which may have privacy impacts to the neighbouring property; however, this balcony is an existing condition and the impacts will be reduced somewhat due to the proposal to shift the building three metres toward Fort Street, which creates a greater offset distance between the balcony and the existing windows on the house located to the east.

The proposal is generally consistent with the *Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan*, 2019, which encourages more housing focused on the Fort Street corridor as well as the adaptive reuse of existing housing stock. The location of the ground level enclosed parking and screened garbage/recycling area along Meares Street does not create an active connection with the street; however, the small size of the site limits opportunities to resolve this without further reducing the parking. On balance, staff consider this to be an acceptable approach given the preservation of the existing character building and the general fit with the surrounding context.

Local Area Plans

Tree Preservation Bylaw and Urban Forest Master Plan

There are no *Tree Preservation Bylaw* impacts and no impacts to public trees with this application.

Regulatory Considerations

Parking Variance

The parking requirement for the proposed five-unit development is eight stalls, which includes seven stalls for the resident parking and one stall for visitor parking. The proposal includes four parking stalls, which are accessed off Meares Street. The ability to provide additional parking stalls is largely limited by the size of the lot and the retention of the existing house. The provision of four stalls for five units may result in some level of increased demand for on-street parking; however, these would be relatively minor and the impacts are offset by the site being located in close proximity to the Downtown Core as well as along a frequent transit along Fort Street.

Heritage Advisory Panel

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its November 10, 2020 meeting and was recommended for approval. The panel also recommended that the applicant consider making the addition to 1909 house more discrete and subordinate. Because the house is not currently designated, the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* do not technically apply, and while the applicant has not revised the proposal to respond to this comment, they have provided clarification on the materials at the upper elevations of the building, which does somewhat improve the contextual relationship between the existing house and new addition.

Additional context and information related to the Heritage Designation can be found in the associated Heritage Designation application staff report.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development is generally consistent with the applicable Design Guidelines. The adaptive reuse of the existing building contributes to the heritage character of the Fort Street

Corridor and the addition is consistent with the pattern of development along Fort and Meares Streets. On balance, staff consider this to be an acceptable approach given the preservation of the existing character building, pedestrian oriented design at Fort Street and the general fit of the application with the surrounding context.

The parking variance is mitigated by the proximity of the site to the Downtown Core and location along a major transit corridor. Therefore, staff recommend for Council's consideration that Council advance the application for consideration at a hearing.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Development Permit with Variance application No. 00142 for the property located at 1125 Fort Street.

Respectfully submitted,

Chloe Bryden Tunis
Planner
Development Services

Karen Hoesel, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
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Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

- Attachment A – Subject Map
- Attachment B – Aerial Map
- Attachment C – Plans date stamped September 9, 2020
- Attachment D – Photographs
- Attachment E – Statement of Significance
- Attachment F – November 10, 2020 Heritage Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes
- Attachment G – Letter from the applicant, date stamped March 3, 2020
- Attachment H – Economic Analysis Memo from applicant dated September 9, 2020
- Attachment I – CALUC Comments dated June 13th, 2019
- Attachment J – Correspondence (letters received from residents).