

4. APPLICATION

4.1 Development Permit Application No. 000580 for 780-798 Fort Street & 1106-1126 Blanshard Street

The City is considering the construction of a twenty-storey hotel with ground floor commercial and the heritage designation and upgrade of an existing, three-storey heritage building.

Applicant meeting attendees:

DAVID FULLBROOK	MERCHANT HOUSE CAPITAL
FRANC D'AMBROSIO	D'AMBROSIO ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM
JENNIFER KAY	TOWNSQUARE PLANNING INC
SCOTT MURDOCH	MURDOCH DE GREEFF INC

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

- height impacts
- landmark building radius response
- building setbacks for the tower portion of the proposal
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

David Fullbrook provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal. Scott Murdoch provided the panel with a detailed presentation of the landscaping plan.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- what is the dimension of the section of the building that sits closest to the eastern property line in terms of the setback?
 - 2.69m at the closest point.
- Can you please speak about the proposed height and massing of the tower and the intent as to how and why you can to those conclusions?
 - The homogenous massing is intentional and the accommodations we're asking for are to allow the floor plate to be shaped in a way that it will diminish its presence from different angles. The additional screening to take the parapets up to really make the top into something different gave us more height.
- In the winter garden, have you considered planting the large garden trees in larger areas or garden beds instead of small spots?
 - No, we haven't gotten into the finer details and will discuss this in further depth. Our strategy will be to have mostly hanging plants.
- Did you investigate the possibility of any viewing platform or area on the roof that would be accessible?
 - No, the size of the floor plates has restricted us in terms of the circulation. We cannot put in another elevator shaft to be able to grant rooftop access.
- Do you have an operator identified for this hotel?
 - There are discussions ongoing with two, no one has committed yet.
- Have you thought about dedicating floors to condo units?

- No, we are not interested in condos. We are interested in the concept of a neighbourhood within a building.
- Can you please explain your justification for a 6m height variance?
 - We required a certain useable sq. footage within the building to allow for the number of units that we are proposing to backflow into a financeable project. The height is a dictate of the viability to the building. If we don't achieve the height the project doesn't work.
- Can we see how the shadows will impact St. Andrews church around 1pm at the front?
 - The tip of the upper extended screen will cover the top corner. It's the tallest portion of the furthest point on the building so it will not be the full extent of the shadow.
- Has any consideration been given to the roof of the Montrose building?
 - It was discussed, but we are not doing a restructuring of this building.
- Did you consider larger openings into the atrium at street level?
 - We wanted to share it and the activity that a hotel may bring. We do have the potential to open to the sidewalk as shown in the plans.

Panel members discussed:

- Concerns for the design with regards to surrounding heritage buildings
- Appreciation for the project
- Comfortable with the height variance
- Contextually the angels and details are well done
- Good application and proposal for this corner of the City
- No concern with building setback
- Livability of units look well thought out
- Sidewalk interface is well achieved
- Concern with shadowing cast on St. Andrews church
- Montrose building's roof needs some visual attention
- Concern for livability for interior trees
- Appreciation for the timber frame structure
- Support for the massing and shape

Motion:

It was moved by Brad Forth, seconded by Marilyn Palmer, that Development Permit Application No. 000580 for 780-798 Fort Street & 1106-1126 Blanshard Street be approved with the following changes:

- Consideration of the treatment to the Montrose building roof with some type of roofscape
- Group tropical trees into larger planters for better chance of long-term survival
- Consideration of a through route for pedestrians to be able to enjoy the atrium

Carried Unanimously