



Advisory Design Panel Report

For the Meeting of July 22, 2020

To: Advisory Design Panel **Date:** July 8, 2020

From: Charlotte Wain, Senior Planner - Urban Design

Subject: Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00130 for 1150 Cook Street

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) is requested to review a Development Permit with Variances Application for 1150 Cook Street and provide advice to Council.

The proposal is to construct a 16-storey, mixed-use building with ground-floor retail and residential above, including approximately 129 dwelling units. The overall proposed density is 7.78:1 floor space ratio (FSR). Variances related to height, number of storeys and short-term bicycle parking are also proposed as part of the Development Permit 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 (DCAP)*.

The proposal is generally consistent with the applicable Design Guidelines outlined in the Development Permit Area, although some deviations from the guidelines are being proposed. Staff are looking for commentary from the Advisory Design Panel with regard to:

- building separation distances
- relationship to the street
- building setback and street trees
- overall expression of the building, with particular attention to the roof termination
- 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: Mr. Dan Robbins
Sakura Developments

Architect: Mr. Tom Staniszakis, AIBC
NSDA Architects

Development Permit Area: Development Permit Area 3 (HC), Core Mixed Use Residential
Heritage Status: N/A

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to construct a high-rise mixed-use building at approximately 16 storeys with one commercial unit on the ground floor and approximately 129 residential units above. The proposed density of the development is 7.78:1 FSR. The proposed height is approximately 47.57m.

The proposal includes the following major design components:

- 129 multiple dwelling units, including studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units
- one commercial unit at the corner of View Street and Cook Street
- outdoor shared residential amenity space located on level two
- the main residential building lobby entrance on Johnson Street
- publicly accessible short-term bike parking located near the commercial entrance on Cook Street
- secure long-term bike parking located on the main floor, with an exit door facing Cook Street
- vehicle parking and servicing located within the building
- public realm streetscape improvements on View and Cook Streets.

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing R-48 Zone, Harris Green District. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the existing Zone. Additionally, the key City policy that pertains to the area has been included in this table.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard R-48	OCP Policy	DCAP
Site area (m ²) – minimum	1009.20	N/A	-	-
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	7.78:1	N/A	-	5.5:1
Total floor area (m ²) – maximum	7855.45	N/A	-	-
Height (m) – maximum	47.57*	30	-	45
Storeys – maximum	16*	10	20	15 (residential) 11 (commercial)
Site coverage (%) – maximum	86	N/A	-	-
Open site space (%) – minimum	14	N/A	-	-
Setbacks (m) – minimum				

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard R-48	OCP Policy	DCAP
Front (Cook Street)	0.5	0.5	-	-
Rear	0.0	0.0		See Building Separation Guidelines
Side (S)	0.0	0.0		See Building Separation Guidelines
Side (N)	0.0	0.0		-
Vehicle parking – minimum	41	0	-	-
Visitor vehicle parking - minimum	0	0	-	-
Bicycle parking stalls – minimum				
Short Term	6*	14	-	-
Long Term	143	143	-	-

Sustainability Features

No sustainability features have been identified in the applicant's letter.

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 twenty 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 main objectives of the Development Permit Area 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential that are relevant to this proposal are:

- to transform the function, form and character of the Core Residential area through mid-to-high rise residential mixed-use and commercial buildings, with greatest heights along Yates and Blanshard Street...
- to conserve heritage value, special character and the significant historic buildings, features and characteristics of this area
- to enhance the area through a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects the function of a major residential centre on the edge of a central business district in scale, massing and character while responding to its context of a skyline with prominent heritage landmark buildings.

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

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 in Development Permit Area 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential 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* (2006)
- *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters* (2010).

The Design Guidelines in the DCAP encourage multi-unit residential development appropriate to the context of the neighbourhood and reflects the differences in allowable building heights and densities. Staff consider that the proposal is generally 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 built form massing, separation distances, relationship to the street and overall expression of the building, with particular attention to the roof termination.

Built Form Massing

DCAP includes a number of design guidelines related to built form which includes reducing the building bulk of upper storeys to minimize the effects of shading, wind vortices, to maintain views to the open sky and to avoid the presence of bulky upper building mass. Cook Street also has views to the Olympic Mountains to the south, which the guidelines seek to protect. Minor deviations to the guidelines are proposed. The proposed secondary street wall (tower) along Cook Street is 2.8m (0.2m below the recommended 3m) from the property line. In addition, the upper storeys on levels 11-15 encroach into the 1:5 building setback ratio along Cook Street and View Street. ADP is invited to comment on the overall built form and massing, and the inconsistencies with the guidelines.

Building Separation Distances

To address privacy issues and open-up views between buildings, the street wall guidelines in the DCAP require a 3m side and rear yard setback to the exterior wall for portions of the building up to 30m in height (excluding the podium), and a 6m side yard setback for portions of the building above 30m (levels 11 – 15). For balconies, the setback should be 3.5m up to 30m and 5.5m above 30m. The guidelines also state that additional clearances for windows are encouraged to

enhance livability for residential uses where feasible. The proposal does not fully meet the requirements as follows:

- West (rear setbacks) for levels 11-15 are approximately 1m below the recommended setbacks for exterior walls and balconies.
- South (side setbacks) levels 11-15 are approximately 0.1m below the recommended setbacks for exterior walls the balconies.

Although these deviations may appear minor, the four fully developed frontages may limit the redevelopment potential of adjacent lots, in particular 1106 Cook Street to the south. Commentary from ADP is requested on the separation distances and whether further setbacks are warranted.

Relationship to the Street

As outlined in the design guidelines, new buildings should be designed to relate well to public streets and sidewalks. Buildings should also have quality architectural materials and detailing in building bases and street walls. The limited and inconsistent detail provided on the architectural elevations, renders and material sheet has impeded the staff review on whether a positive pedestrian experience would be achieved along View and Cook Streets. In addition, the site plan indicates a gas meter on Cook Street with “decorative metal gates” but insufficient detail has been included on the elevations to fully review this aspect of the design. No detail has been provided for the proposed soffit materials and since the building overhang above the ground floor is significant, this would likely play a key role in the creation of a pleasant streetscape.

Almost half of the frontage along View Street is dedicated to vehicle access and a garbage room, and a large portion of the frontage along Cook Street includes access to mechanical rooms and a gas meter enclosure. Staff have concerns that the configuration of the BC Hydro Pad Mounted Transformer (PMT) may not be compliant with current specifications, and if revisions are required this would likely exacerbate the negative impacts on the Cook Street frontage.

ADP is invited to comment on the overall design of the ground floor as it relates to the pedestrian experience, recognizing that further detail may be warranted.

Building Setback and Street Trees

Cook Street is identified as a commercial street in the DCAP. The general design criteria for these streets encourages a single row of trees on both sides of the right-of-way (ROW) to enhance the pedestrian realm. The canopy from the continuous row of mature horse chestnut trees along Cook Street is seen as a valuable asset to the overall pedestrian experience. Staff have concerns that insufficient building and balcony setbacks have been provided along Cook Street with decks and balconies for levels 2-4 approximately 0.5m from the property line. Although these setbacks are technically within the DCAP guidelines, the proposal may impact the future growth of the trees and create potential Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) challenges associated with the close proximity of branches to balconies. In addition, the current section drawings do not appear to show the street tree locations accurately, therefore the impact of the proposal on the street trees may be magnified. Design revisions are warranted that may include increased building and balcony setbacks or off-setting balconies to ensure the street trees can feasibly be maintained. Commentary from ADP is requested on the appropriateness of the proposed building setbacks along Cook Street.

Architectural Expression

The design guidelines encourage buildings to have clearly defined base, middle and top. While the podium is clearly distinguished and complimentary to the tower, the overall termination of the building appears unfinished. The applicant has responded to staff comments by included an illuminated glass guardrail that would create a “halo” effect at nighttime. Vegetation was originally proposed but has been removed in the latest design iteration, since the roof is not intended to be used as an amenity space. Staff are of the opinion that the termination of the building warrants further design refinement and ADP is invited to comment on this aspect.

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.00130 for 1150 Cook Street be approved as presented.

Option Two

That the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit with Variances Application No.00130 for 1150 Cook 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 with Variances Application No.00130 for 1150 Cook Street does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and polices 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 July 8, 2020
- Applicant's letter dated July 8, 2020.

cc: Dan Robbins, Sakura Developments, Applicant; Tom Staniszki, NSDA Architects.