

5. Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00248 and Development Permit Application No. 000608 for 579-589 Johnson Street (Downtown)

John O'Reilly provided a brief presentation.

Panel Discussion, Questions and Comments on Staff Presentation

- How much of the original building is retained?
 - Alley recycles brick from the Shotbolt Chemist, columns retained in original locations
- The inclusion of the building on the heritage register is a technicality and a result of a 1980s heritage inventory of the downtown. HAPL discussed the proposed replacement of the building in December 2020 and the panel believed that was reasonable given the loss of heritage fabric.
- For 589 Johnson Street, what would the original ground floor-to-ceiling height have been, are the full columns saved?
 - The original columns define the original height of the building in the rendering and the full columns are saved. Columns are in the same location that they were historically, but glazing is moved back to generate activity on the street.

Applicant provided a brief presentation.

Panel Discussion, Questions and Comments on Applicant Presentation

- At what point does the timber screen become visually permeable, what is behind it?
 - Visual permeability depends on the viewing angle. From a distance up or down the street, the recessed balconies behind the screen are not visible, but from across the street they can be seen through the screen. The permeability of the screen allows for more sunlight into the units.
- How do you justify the random placement of windows? Other buildings on the street have windows on the upper level more structured to match the street.
 - We went with a more modern design for the façade that aligned with the playfulness of the other properties
- Why is the screen on the street wall curved as well?
 - It matches the curve of the railing on the portion of the building at the rear of the property.
- Lower portion of the building needs more attention to detail like other buildings on the street.
- The units on the north side of the building will be heavily shaded, are balconies a good fit on this side? Doesn't the screen make lighting conditions worse?
 - There will be light during parts of the day and visibility from within the units, as well there are openings where there are no slats by the balconies.
- What are the screen slats made of?
 - Painted metal.
- Design guidelines encouraging a vertically proportioned façade are not met in this proposal.
- The design is an appropriate contemporary idea, it just needs improvement
- Completely inappropriate for the context, not a background building but a landmark. Too much emphasis on contrast. This street calls for a building that is in the background
- Building mass and scale are appropriate

- Building needs a clear terminus with a modern cornice. The building façade currently just blurs into the sky. It lacks a sense of permanence and solidity.
- Ground floor height is appropriate, but ground floor detailing is generic and could be anywhere in the country. Nothing about the ground floor design says “Lower Johnson Street”

Motion:

That the Heritage Advisory Panel recommend to Council that Heritage Alteration Permit Application No. 00248 and Development Permit Application No. 000608 for 579-589 Johnson Street does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and polices and should be declined. Key areas to be revised include:

- Form and massing is seen as supportable.
- Design approach to front façade is not seen as supportable and is contrary to significant elements of the design of the Old Town Design Guidelines.
 - 5.1 – Building Mass, Scale and Siting - The roofline of the building is not distinctly terminated.
 - 5.2 – Street Rhythm – design new buildings to reflect the established proportions, composition, and spatial organization of adjacent facades.
 - 5.2.2 – The location of the Johnson Street entries should be reconsidered. The majority of the glazing assembly should be flush with the property line, with columns integrated into the assembly and inset doors.
 - 5.3.1 – Façade Composition - The façade does not have a clear delineation into base/middle/top, and the façade lacks solidity.
 - Re-examine the size proportion and rhythm of proposed windows.
 - The panel questions the appropriateness of the balconies and the screen treatment along Johnson Street and suggests there could be more appropriate solutions that better meet the guidelines.
 - 5.4.2 – Relationship to Street and Open Space - The façade does not incorporate recessed entryways with unique designs and finishes like transom windows, trim details or attractive finishing materials on entryway flooring.
 - 5.5.7 – Materials and Finishes - The exterior materials of the front façade and rear portion of the building do not reflect local heritage palettes.

Moved: Steve Barber

Seconded: Helen Edwards

Carried (unanimously)

Graham Walker left the meeting.