



## Advisory Design Panel Report For the Meeting of June 22, 2022

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**To:** Advisory Design Panel **Date:** June 15, 2022  
**From:** Leanne Taylor, Senior Planner  
**Subject:** **Development Permit with Variance Application No. 000207 for 722 and 726 Discovery Street**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP) is requested to review a Development Permit with Variance Application for 722 and 726 Discovery Street and provide advice to Council. The proposal is for an eight-storey, multi-unit residential building consisting of approximately 90 dwelling units of supportive housing and requires a Rezoning Application.

The subject properties are designated Core Employment in the *Official Community Plan (OCP, 2012)*, which supports residential mixed-use, work/ live, and commercial uses, including office, hotels and other visitor accommodation, located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street. The OCP supports building heights up to 15 storeys and a base density of 3:1 Floor Space Ratio (FSR) up to a maximum of 5:1 FSR, of which the residential density does not exceed 3:1 FSR.

The *Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan* refers to the *Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP)* for land use policies related to use, height and density. DCAP identifies the subject properties within the Rock Bay District, which envisions the area as a key employment centre that attracts a range of commercial and light industrial businesses to provide a more diversified and resilient employment base. With respect to residential development, the Plan states that residential and residential mixed-use development are primarily located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street, and that residential development is located, designed and sited to mitigate any potentially negative effects on the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities. Building heights up to 60m (approximately 20 storeys) and a base density of 3:1 FSR up to a maximum of 5:1 FSR, of which the residential density does not exceed 3:1 FSR is supported in the Plan.

Staff are looking for commentary from the Advisory Design Panel with regard to:

- building fenestration
- blank wall on north elevation
- termination of building
- building setbacks
- 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

<b>Applicant:</b>	Mr. Mark Griffiths S2 Architecture
<b>Architect:</b>	Mr. Mark Griffiths, Architect AIBC S2 Architecture
<b>Development Permit Area:</b>	Development Permit Area 7A, Corridors
<b>Heritage Status:</b>	N/A

## Description of Proposal

The proposal is for an eight-storey, multi-unit residential development consisting of 90 dwelling units of supportive housing. The proposed density is 3.56:1 floor space ratio. The variance is related to parking.

The proposal includes the following major design components:

- steel-framed, modular building
- exterior materials on building include vertical metal panel, metal plate panel, metal plate spandrel panel horizontal fibre cement plank, concrete composite metal cladding, heavy timber columns, steel doors, and metal handrail and guardrail systems
- corrugated metal screening for rooftop mechanical equipment
- exterior finishes of bicycle parking enclosure include corrugated metal siding, metal panel fascia and chain-link fencing
- 90 self-contained dwelling units including a kitchenette, bathroom and sleeping area
- commercial kitchen, dining area, and support staff offices on the main floor
- outdoor common area, includes benches, gazebo with picnic table and lawn area
- substantial new landscaping and 11 new trees to be planted on site
- long-term bicycle parking enclosure for 30 bikes
- no residential or visitor parking spaces on site.

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing M-1 Zone, Limited Light Industrial 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	M-1 Zone	OCP Policy	DCAP
Site area (m <sup>2</sup> ) – minimum	1344.83	n/a		
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	<b>3.56:1*</b>	3	5:1 (max residential density up to 3:1)	5:1 (max residential density up to 3:1)
Total floor area (m <sup>2</sup> ) –	<b>~4730*</b>	n/a		

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	M-1 Zone	OCP Policy	DCAP
maximum				
Height (m) – maximum	~30.02*	15	n/a	60
Storeys – maximum	8	n/a	15	20
Site coverage (%) – maximum	47.50	n/a		
Open site space (%) – minimum	52.50	n/a		
<b>Setbacks (m) – minimum</b>				
Front (Discovery Street)	3.20	n/a		
Rear (North)	3	3 or 0		
Side yard (West)	14.67 (building) 1.29* (bicycle enclosure)	3 or 0		
Side yard (East)	2.5* (building) 1.6* (heat pump)	3 or 0		
Vehicle parking – minimum	0*	18 (residential) 1 (commercial)		
Visitor vehicle parking - minimum	0*	9		
<b>Bicycle parking stalls – minimum</b>				
Long-term	30*	90		
Short-term	3*	9		

### Sustainability Features

The application proposes the following sustainability features:

- meet BC Energy Step Code 3
- consideration of solar voltaic rooftop panels.

### Consistency with Policies and Design Guidelines

## Official Community Plan

The subject properties are designated Core Employment in the (OCP, 2012), which supports residential mixed-use, work/ live, and commercial, including office, hotels and other visitor accommodation, for the areas located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street. The OCP supports building heights up to 15 storeys and a base density of 3:1 FSR up to a maximum of 5:1 FSR, of which the residential density does not exceed 3:1 FSR. This proposal is further advancing several OCP objectives related to housing, employment, and community well-being by locating non-market rental housing within the Urban Core to enable easy access to services and facilities for daily living.

The OCP identifies the subject properties within Development Permit Area (DPA) 7A: Corridors, which envisions the revitalization of areas of commercial use along corridors through high-quality architecture, landscape and urban design to enhance their visual appearance, strengthen commercial viability and encourage pedestrian use.

## Downtown Core Area Plan

### *Land Use Policies*

The *Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan* refers to the DCAP for land use policies related to use, height and density. DCAP identifies the subject properties within the Rock Bay District, which envisions the area as a key employment centre that attracts a range of commercial and light industrial businesses to provide a more diversified and resilient employment base. With respect to residential development, the Plan states that residential and residential mixed-use development are primarily located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street, and that residential development is located, designed, and sited to mitigate any potentially negative effects on the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities. Building heights up to 60m (approximately 20 storeys) and a base density of 3:1 FSR up to a maximum of 5:1 FSR, of which the residential density does not exceed 3:1 FSR is supported in the Plan.

Further to the land use policies, the Plan includes policies pertaining to housing affordability and specifically, the importance of supporting the development of non-market housing in the Downtown Core Area as it continues to grow and fostering partnerships with provincial, regional, non-profit and industry partners to deliver affordable housing in the Urban Core.

### *DCAP Design Guidelines*

In March 2022, Council adopted new DCAP design guidelines that will come into effect this June. Staff considered these design guidelines when evaluating this proposal as they will apply while this proposal is still in process.

The new design guidelines recommend a site area of 1600m<sup>2</sup> for interior lots to accommodate a mid to high-rise building (a tall building over 23m in height) in order to meet appropriate tower setbacks, maintain access to sunlight and sky views from public open spaces, and minimize impacts on neighbouring lots. The combined site area is approximately 1344m<sup>2</sup>. For a mid-rise building (a residential building up to 36m in height), the new guidelines recommend a 10m setback from the side and rear property lines. The building is setback approximately 14.67m from the west property line; otherwise, the proposal does not comply with these design guidelines.

The design guidelines recommend that the tower floor plates do not exceed a maximum size of 650m<sup>2</sup>. The tower floor plate size is approximately 559m<sup>2</sup>. Lastly, the design guidelines recommend a maximum floor plate width of 24m and a north to south orientation. The floor plate

width is approximately 19.34m and the building has a north-south orientation.

### Design Guidelines for Development Permit Area 7A: Corridors

- *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (2006)*
- *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)*
- *Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines and Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines in the Downtown Core Area Plan.*

## **ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

The following section(s) identify and provide a brief analysis of the areas where the Panel is requested to provide commentary. The Panel's commentary on any other aspects of the proposal is also welcome.

### Building Fenestration

The *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (2006)* include design guidelines pertaining to the arrangement, proportion and pattern of windows, window rhythm (massing relationship between walls and openings), and the height-to-width relationship. Staff have encouraged the application to consider a more rectilinear-style window, especially along the front elevation, to give the building a more "residential-feel." Staff invite the ADP's further input on the building fenestration.

### Blank Wall on North Elevation

Mitigating the visual impact of blank walls where unavoidable, through screening, landscaping, public art, patios, special materials, or other solutions to make them more visually interesting, is recommended in the DCAP design guidelines. Staff invite the ADP's input on the blank wall on north elevation and request recommendations regarding potential design solutions to mitigate its impact from Blanshard and Douglas Street.

### Termination of Building

The design guidelines recommend a distinctive roof top to terminate towers that distinguish the building from others and contribute to an interesting and varied skyline. The guidelines provide some strategies for achieving this, such as:

- *stepping back the upper floors of buildings*
- *incorporating a significant vertical element or finial*
- *incorporating a decorative roof "top hat"*
- *screening mechanical equipment creatively*
- *incorporating roof top landscaping and green roof features.*

Staff feel that the rooftop could be further refined to improve its visual interest and invite ADP's input on this aspect of the design.

### Building Setbacks

For a mid-rise building (a residential building up to 36m in height), the guidelines recommend a 10m setback from the side and rear property lines. The proposed building is setback approximately 14.67m from the west property line, 2.5m from the east property line and 3m from the rear property line. There may be an opportunity to shift the building slightly to the west to increase the building setback from the east property line to accommodate some screening and soft landscaping. Staff invite ADP's input on the proposed building setbacks in relation to the impacts these smaller setbacks may have on the potential redevelopment of adjacent properties.

## **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 Variance Application No. 000207 for 722 and 726 Discovery Street be approved as presented.

### **Option Two**

That the Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit Application No. 000207 for 722 and 726 Discovery 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 Application No. 000207 for 722 and 726 Discovery 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
- Architectural plans date stamped May 4, 2022
- Landscape plans date stamped May 4, 2022
- Civil plans date stamped May 4, 2022
- Applicant's letter dated May 2, 2022
- Arborist report dated September 1, 2021

cc: Mark Griffiths S2 Architecture Applicant & Architect.