



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of June 29, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** June 15, 2023
From: Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: **Development Permit Application No. 00615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue**

RECOMMENDATION

“That Council authorize the issuance of Development Permit No. 00615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue, in accordance with Plans date stamped May 31, 2023, subject to:

- a. Development meeting all Zoning Regulation Bylaw requirements.
- b. That the applicant prepare and execute a 1.6m Statutory Right of Way as indicated on the plans date stamped May 31, 2023, with contents satisfactory to the Director of Engineering, Transportation and Public Works, and form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
- c. That the Development Permit, if issued, lapses two years from the date of this resolution.”

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 491(7) of the *Local Government Act*, where the purpose of the designation is the revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted, 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 Application for the property located at 1555 Hillside Avenue. The proposal is for a one-storey retail commercial building on a vacant lot. The proposed building has a 6m setback from Hillside Avenue and a surface parking area in the rear yard for nine vehicle parking spaces.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- The proposal is not consistent with the vision for Town Centres to achieve building heights of three to five storeys that will define the street wall; however, the proposed destination retail use is envisioned within designated a Town Centre

- The existing lot dimensions, specifically narrow lot width, pose a challenge to redevelopment that is more consistent with the envisioned place character features for Town Centres
- The proposal is generally consistent with applicable design guidelines for Town Centres, including providing:
 - a ground-oriented commercial use
 - front yard landscaping and outdoor seating
 - a buffer to residential uses to the south by retaining existing landscaping
 - rear yard parking that is screened from public streets.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is for a one-storey retail commercial building.

Specific details include:

- single-storey building intended for a single tenant with metal cladding and a flat roof
- nine surface vehicle parking spaces located in the rear yard and accessed via shared drive aisle with 1561 Hillside Avenue
- materials include metal panel, polymer wall cladding, cement board, steel canopy, and aluminium frame storefront glazing
- landscaping elements include one Ginko Biloba tree and outdoor bench (front yard), retained and improved landscaping (rear yard along Myrtle Avenue), cultured stone cladding (existing concrete wall) and a wood fence.

Land Use Context

The area is characterized by a wide range of commercial uses located within the Hillside Town Centre, including Hillside Mall, which is located opposite the subject property. Residential uses are located to the west and south, including single-family homes along Myrtle Avenue and apartments on Hillside Avenue. The subject site and adjacent properties all have frontage on both Hillside Avenue and Myrtle Avenue.



Sustainability

The following sustainability features are associated with this application:

- permeable pavers in parking and walkways
- high-efficiency HVAC systems
- low-flow water fixtures
- dark-sky compliant LED lighting
- low-emissivity storefront glazing
- light-colored high-albedo roofing
- drought-tolerant native planting.

Bowker Creek Watershed

The site is in the Bowker Creek Watershed, approximately 55m from the creek. *The Bowker Creek Blueprint- A 100-Year Action Plan to Restore the Bowker Creek Watershed*, was endorsed by Council in 2011. In February 2021, Council directed staff to include consideration of impacts on the watershed as part of land use matters that occur within the Bowker Creek watershed.

The Blueprint identifies watershed management principles to be considered in development of land within the watershed, including:

- minimize building footprints and reduce impervious surfaces, with a goal of 30% effective impervious area
- direct runoff from hard surfaces to green infrastructure (e.g., rain gardens) to detain and infiltrate runoff to reduce flows and improve water quality entering the creek
- conserve green spaces, protect natural areas or replant with native species
- a green streets approach to infiltrate road runoff in boulevards.

The following management watershed principles have been incorporated into the site design:

- permeable paving with underground storage manages site stormwater runoff
- existing trees and shrubs are maintained on the Myrtle frontage
- landscaping includes drought-tolerant native plantings.

Community Consultation

Consistent with the *Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variance Applications*, since this is a Development Permit without any variances, there is no requirement to refer the application for consultation.

Sustainable Mobility

No sustainable mobility improvements beyond minimum City standards are proposed in association with this application.

Public Realm

No public realm improvements beyond City standard requirements are proposed in association with this application.

Accessibility

No accessibility improvements are proposed beyond what is required through the *British Columbia Building Code*.

Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The site is currently a vacant lot and was previously occupied by a small commercial building (Demolition Permit issued in 2018).

Under the current C1-L Zone, Commercial Landscape District, permitted uses include single-family and two-family dwellings, mixed residential-commercial uses, and public buildings, as well as a range of commercial uses, including chartered banks, business offices, professional businesses, retail stores, restaurants, theatres.

Data Table

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing C1-L Zone, Commercial Landscape District:

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard
Site area (m ²) (min.)	1,286.00	n/a
Floor area (m ²) (max.)	450.00	1,800.22
Floor space ratio	0.35	1.40
Height (m) (max.)	7.60	12.00
Storeys (max.)	1	n/a
Setbacks (m) – minimum		
Front (Hillside Ave)	6.00	6.00
Rear (Myrtle Ave)	26.50	9.00
Side (east)	5.74	0.00
Side (west)	0.06	0.00
Site Coverage (%) (maximum)	36.90	n/a
Parking (min.)	9	9
EV Parking	1	1
Drive aisle dimension (m)	7	7
Parking location	Rear	n/a

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Zone Standard
Short term bicycle parking	2	2
Long term bicycle parking	2	2

ANALYSIS

Official Community Plan

The subject property is designated Town Centre under the *Official Community Plan*, which envisions mixed-use buildings up to approximately ten storeys in height and with a floor space ratio (FSR) generally up to 2:1. The vision for a Town Centre is for three to five storey building facades to define the street wall. The proposal does not include a mix of uses as envisioned for a Town Centre, and the proposed building height is two storeys below the recommended street wall for this portion of Hillside Avenue.

The *Official Community Plan* also identifies this property as within Development Permit Area 4: Town Centres. Objectives include:

- to realize the vision for the Hillside Mall as a complete Town Centre which provides a full range of services, employment, and housing
- to integrate commercial buildings in a manner that is complementary to established place character
- to enhance the place character of established areas and their streetscapes through high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design
- to achieve more livable environments through considerations for human-scaled design, quality of open spaces, safety and accessibility.

Specific guidelines contained in DPA 4, include:

- buildings are encouraged to have three to five storey facades that define the street wall with shop windows and building entrances that are oriented to face the street
- off-street parking must be underground, at the rear of buildings or otherwise screened.

Oaklands Neighbourhood Plan

The *Oaklands Neighbourhood Plan* designates the subject property as “Commercial”. The Plan aims to confine the expansion of commercial activities to established commercial areas and to encourage a high-quality landscaped buffer with adjacent residential properties.

The *Oaklands Neighbourhood Plan* includes the following design guidelines:

- break up expanses of surface parking by integrating landscaping
- provide coherent landscaping throughout the commercial properties along the south side of Hillside Avenue to soften the urban character and provide a sensitive transition to the surrounding residential uses.

Advisory Design Panel Review

The application was reviewed by the Advisory Design Panel on September 28, 2022. At that meeting, the following motion was passed:

The Advisory Design Panel recommend to Council that Development Permit Application No. 00615 for 1555 Hillside Avenue be approved with the following changes:

- *Consideration for a stormwater management system*
- *Improvement to the pedestrian experience from the parking area to the entrance on the Hillside frontage*
- *Further consideration to the colour palette.*

The applicant has responded by:

- adding permeable paving to the parking area
- adding underground stormwater storage
- revising materials (metal to glass) to the secondary entrance and adding a canopy
- minor revision to colour siding in the front elevation from a light brown to grey.

The applicant's letter, dated October 27, 2022, provides further details regarding their response to ADP.

Tree Preservation Bylaw and Urban Forest Master Plan

The goals of the *Urban Forest Master Plan* include protecting, enhancing, and expanding Victoria's urban forest and optimizing community benefits from the urban forest in all neighbourhoods.

The arbourist report inventoried 20 trees impacted by the proposal. There are no trees proposed for removal, with all on-site and off-site as well as municipal trees, proposed for retention. The landscape plan shows one additional tree proposed for the development, which would be in the front yard adjacent to the main entry.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposal for a destination retail use on the subject property is consistent with the uses envisioned for properties within the Town Centre designation. The proposed ground-oriented storefront entry on Hillside Avenue, retention of existing landscaping and provision of new landscaping, and screened rear yard parking is generally consistent with applicable design guidelines; therefore, it is recommended that Council approve this application.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Development Permit Application No. 00615 for the property located at 1555 Hillside Avenue.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Carroll
Senior Planner
Development Services Division

Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Plans date stamped May 31, 2023
- Attachment D: Letter to Mayor and Council dated January 14, 2022
- Attachment E: Advisory Design Panel response letter dated October 27, 2022