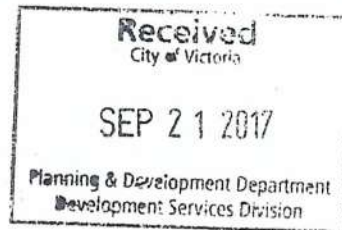


Christine Lintott
Architects



September 21, 2017

The City of Victoria
Attention: Mayor and Council
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6



RE: 515 Chatham Street, Development Permit Application – Further Revised

On behalf of Old Town Ironworks Inc., we are pleased to submit for your consideration our further revised application for Development Permit for the redevelopment of the two municipally addressed properties at 515 and 533 Chatham Street, herein referenced as the anticipated consolidated property, 515 Chatham Street.

The proposal envisions a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development for this notable site on the edge of Victoria's historic Old Town district. Modest and efficient suite designs, afford street views and/or overlooks into an expansive, resident-oriented, interior courtyard. New greenspace/open space, access to light and air, and proximity to extensive services and amenities figure prominently in the appeal of this development.

Please consider our application in the context of the information provided below, in addition to our complete drawing re-submission and accompanying documentation.

Description of Proposal

The development site is bounded by Chatham Street on the north, Store Street on the west, residential property fronting on Chatham Street to the east and commercial properties fronting on Herald Street to the south.

The proposal includes the following:

- Replacement of surface parking lots fronting on Chatham and Store Streets with a mixed-use commercial/residential development;
- Construction of four building structures, with two five storey buildings fronting Chatham and Store streets, stepping down to three storeys along the southern property boundary, with a single level courtyard podium accessing through to Herald Street.
- Landscaping of an intensive central courtyard, composed of porous, resident-oriented pedestrian connections and a dynamic hard and soft scape treatment;
- Definition and animation of the public realm on all street frontages.

Project Benefits and Amenities

The proposal as submitted retains its existing zoning designation, requesting variances for overall height and provision of five residential units at grade fronting along Chatham Street. It responds to the significant demand for housing in the City's urban core, providing a range of unit types. Off-street parking is provided to meet market demand and mitigate against increasing demand in the Downtown, nonetheless the project is positioned to be pedestrian oriented, with street level access off Chatham and Store Streets as well as from Herald Street. The proposal anticipates contiguous streetscape improvements compliant with the City of Victoria standards. Provision of a landscaped, resident-oriented central courtyard brings greenspace to a former parking lot on a major intersection in the neighbourhood, and the introduction of a sloped pedestrian pathway along the east property line, promotes daytime connectivity between Old Town and the Rock Bay District.

Requested Variances

We are requesting a 4.52m variance in height from the allowable 15m to 19.52 m. This height is the result of providing a taller, "commercial" height, street level frontage, distributing the allowable density across the site to frame on-site open space, and providing stair (and elevator) access to rooftop patios for residents. The tallest point on the building is the top of the stair to rooftop access (the higher elevator overrun is excluded from the calculation of height). It is this amenity feature that is the largest driver of the requested variance in height, at approximately 3.1m. The allocation of the residential component of the project over five storeys allows the calculated density of 2.98:1 (less than the allowable 3.0:1) to be achieved while also being able to provide resident-oriented, on-site open space.

With respect to the second variance to allow residential use on the first, street level, our client's market research has shown that conventional retail/commercial uses along Chatham Street are less viable, at this time. The provision of residential/home occupation use along a portion of the street frontage will appeal to small scale entrepreneurs, providing an opportunity for affordable, small scale businesses to reside in this transitional neighbourhood. The building has been designed in such a way that as the neighbourhood evolves and conventional retail becomes more viable, the building can be adapted to support this evolution. It is critical that the uses along this frontage are successful in providing animation, immediately and ongoing, affording necessary vitality to this changing part of the community.

Neighbourhood

The proposal occurs on the edge of the Core Historic district of the downtown. Accessed directly off two streets, Chatham Street to the north and Store Street to the west, the proposed ground oriented, low rise structures strengthen the pedestrian-oriented nature of this project. Further, the project is conceived to enhance connectivity to the vibrant downtown core through courtyard access across a neighbouring site directly through to Herald Street. This latter linkage is a key set out concept for the project and is a definer of the massing and ideas about connectivity for the residents to the larger neighbourhood that the project is proposing. A sloped pedestrian pathway introduced along the east property line, in response to input from the Advisory Design Panel, replaces the existing stair connection providing access for residents of 532 Herald Street to parking, while also providing daytime connectivity through the site to Chatham Street.

Design and Development Permit Guidelines

The proposal falls within the Downtown neighbourhood and is consistent with the strategic direction described in the City's Official Community Plan to "accommodate 50% of forecast new population and housing growth earmarked for the Urban Core over the next 30 years". Designated as a Core Historic site, the proposal is consistent with the built form, place character features and uses of the designation; Specifically:

- "multi-unit residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings"
- "buildings up to approximately five stories set close to the sidewalk with high site coverage"
- "historic building forms and materials, and compatible new construction"
- "total floor space ratios ranging up to approximately 3:1"

Referencing the applicable *Design Guidelines: Old Town, Victoria BC*, the proposal is consistent with the following guidelines:

- "the design of new buildings...and new urban spaces to respond to changing ways of working, living and playing..."
- "There are many ways to design a new building...that are in harmony with their surroundings. They range from copying nearby architectural forms, through re-interpreting new materials, to using new forms and materials that compliment what is already there. All of these approaches are valid as long as they are skillfully executed."
- "Designs...that can assert themselves – that have their own presence while being sensitive to their context..."
- In addition to the above noted guidelines, a number of design principles and concepts have been applied to the density, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance. These are summarized as follows:
 - The proposal approaches the available zoning compliant density at 3:1, with the residential floor space composed of a variety of unit types, from studios to multi-level townhomes. Residential vehicle and bicycle parking is provided through a two-level covered/underground structure.
 - The scale and layout of the proposal is ground-oriented and pedestrian scaled, defining a distinct, usable courtyard for residents, along with delineating edges to the adjacent streets. Commercial uses are located to animate the street (at the corner of Chatham and Store Street), while residential uses are configured to optimize access to light and air, with strong connections to the ground and overlook into the urban realm, including orientation to the on-site open spaces.
 - Connections to the surrounding streets for residents are provided, including direct access to Chatham, Store and Herald Streets. Passageways and pockets of seating, are provided to support rest and contemplation, animating this on-site resident amenity.
 - The building forms aim to strike a balance between the historic, industrial nature of the site and the present day urban fabric of the neighbourhood. A modest palette of high quality materials is intended to

withstand the ruggedness of the local climate. This palette of materials is punctuated by robust elements such as accent cast iron fixtures and fittings (lights, opening surrounds and rain water leaders), and highly detailed street frontages intended to make a direct connection to the site's industrial history.

Finally, with respect to consultation, extensive marketing consultation was undertaken to determine the optimal range of unit typologies and amenities in response to identified opportunities for aligning with the target market population's income levels and self-expression. The result of these consultations is a ground-oriented, pedestrian-focused development, affording access to a full range of urban amenities, both on site and in proximity to the project.

Transportation

As no off-street parking is required for this site, the proposal exceeds the vehicle parking standards of *Schedule C Off-street Parking*, and provides both resident and visitor stalls. The proposal meets the bicycle parking standards of Schedule C. Per the City's *Greenways Map*, Chatham Street is designated a "shared greenway", which the proposed streetscape improvements reinforce. The proposal is in close-proximity to major downtown transit routes, especially those served by the Douglas corridor. Proposed sidewalk improvements are incorporated along the Chatham and Store Street frontages, as are enhanced pedestrian connections between Chatham and Herald Streets.

Green Building Features

In site selection and design, the proposal is an infill project, in the City's downtown core. Proximity to services and amenities and transportation options constitute positive planning and design practices. The project will meet the energy and water efficiency requirements of the British Columbia Building Code. Stormwater management practices are incorporated in the landscape proposal, as well as a net gain of the overall number of trees proposed, enhancing the City's urban forest.

Infrastructure

Subject to the City of Victoria's Engineering assessment of the proposal, the site is adequately serviced along both Store and Chatham streets, where sanitary, storm, and water mains reside. In addition, gas is available along the Store Street corridor. Infrastructure tie-ins are including in the Civil documentation, as well as coordinated with the landscape and related site improvements.

Summary

The proposed construction of a mixed-use residential project at the corner of Chatham and Store Streets, facilitates the transition of a district that is under-utilized and dominated by surface parking lots, to one that supports the extension of the urban fabric of the Downtown and Old Town districts. In particular, this proposal aims to meet the urgent demand for housing options in close proximity to employment, commercial and recreational opportunities with a diverse range of unit types. Strongly defined street edges in combination with a significant urban green space for residents aim to make a meaningful contribution to the strengthening of the neighbourhood fabric.

We welcome the opportunity to work with both City staff and yourselves to move forward with the proposal and to respond to the demand for housing in our community. We thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,

Christine Lintott, Principal Architect AIBC, AAA, SAA, MRAIC
Christine Lintott Architect