



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of January 25, 2018

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** January 11, 2018
From: Jonathan Tinney, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00065 for 736 Princess Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

That Council decline Development Permit with Variance Application No. 00065 for the property located at 736 Princess Avenue.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 489 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Development Permit in accordance with the applicable guidelines specified in the *Community Plan*. A Development Permit may vary or supplement the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* but may not vary the use or density of the land from that specified in the Bylaw.

In accordance with Section 498 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Development Variance Permit that varies a *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* provided the permit does not vary the use or density of land from that specified in the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a Development Permit with Variance Application for the property located at 736 Princess Avenue. The proposal is to construct a six storey mixed use building consisting of ground floor commercial and residential above. The variance is related to parking.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- The subject property is within Development Permit Area 7A: Corridors – Douglas Street and Blanshard Street, and subject to the design guidelines contained in the *Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP)*, *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)* and *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)*. There are aspects of the design, such as the animated ground floor commercial space with floor to ceiling glazing, building articulation, materials and outdoor patio space that comply with the design guidelines.
- The DCAP designates the subject property as Residential Mixed-Use District, which supports mixed-use buildings and encourages visually articulated designs and quality

architectural materials, as well as, distinct building bases that enhance the visual interest for pedestrians.

- The neighbourhood has a mix of building types. The two-storey brick building to the east on the adjoining property may have heritage value and the proposed building is out of context in relation to this building.
- Vehicle and bicycle parking variances are required to facilitate this development. No vehicle parking is being proposed onsite for the residential units. Under the current Schedule C – Off-street Parking, 115 parking spaces are required for the residential and commercial uses, whereas under the new draft Schedule C, only 53 parking spaces would be required. Instead, the applicant is proposing to provide a privately-run electric vehicle share program which would include six electric cars, 12 scooters and two electric bikes for residents and the community and there is no guarantee that this program would operate for the life of the building.
- The applicant is also proposing to reduce the required number of Class 1 bicycle parking spaces from 75 to 70, and Class 2 bicycle parking spaces from eight to six.
- Both the vehicle and bicycle parking variances, and proposed one-vehicle driveway, are not supported by staff because of the on-street parking impacts that would likely result on the surrounding streets, impacting nearby businesses and residents; as well as the circulation impacts onsite.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is for a six-storey mixed-use building consisting of ground floor commercial and residential above. Specific details include:

- mid-rise building form containing contemporary-style design features, including a flat roofline, industrial-like materials and floor to ceiling glazing at the ground level
- one main entrance into the building and a controlled entrance into an inner courtyard area
- a lounge on the ground level for residents and coffee shop patrons including a kitchen and dining area for large groups
- unit sizes range from 20m² to 30m² (215ft² to 323ft²), fully self-contained and furnished with a complete kitchen and full bathroom
- five units would be accessible (one on each residential floor)
- exterior materials include horizontal corrugated metal with aluminium flashing, cement board, architectural concrete and corten steel
- tinted glazing on upper levels
- large outdoor patio with seating for coffee shop
- inner private courtyard for residents with outdoor seating and raised planter beds
- decorative and permeable surface treatment
- 70 Class 1 bicycle parking spaces and six Class two bicycle parking spaces
- six electric cars, 12 scooters and two electric bikes for residents and the community.

The proposed variances are related to:

- reducing the required number of parking spaces from 115 to 0.
- reducing the required number of Class 1 bicycle parking spaces from 75 to 70, and Class 2 bicycle parking spaces from eight to six.

Sustainability Features

As indicated in the applicant's letter dated November 17, 2017, the following sustainability features are associated with this Application:

- meet Step 1 of the BC Energy Step Code and high-performance building envelope tightness system
- heat recovery ventilators
- low flow fixtures
- recycled materials
- onsite electric vehicle share program
- permeable surface treatment.

Active Transportation Impacts

The application proposes the following features which support active transportation:

- 70 secure and enclosed bicycle parking spaces
- six electric vehicles
- twelve electric scooters (four would be covered)
- two electric bikes.

Public Realm Improvements

No public realm improvements are proposed in association with this Development Permit with Variance application.

Accessibility Impact Statement

The British Columbia Building Code regulates accessibility as it pertains to buildings. The proposed outdoor areas surrounding the proposed building and five dwelling units (one on each residential floor) are designed to be accessible.

Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The site is presently a surface parking lot.

Data Table

The following data table compares the proposal with the existing M-1 and CA-1 Zones. An asterisk is used to identify where the proposal is less stringent than the existing zone.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Existing Zone (M-1 Zone)
Site area (m ²) - minimum	556.00	n/a
Density (Floor Space Ratio) - maximum	4.51*	3.00:1
Total floor area (m ²) - maximum	2950.00*	1668.00

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	Existing Zone (M-1 Zone)
Height (m) - maximum	19.95*	15
Storeys - maximum	6	n/a
Site coverage % - maximum	85.8	n/a
Open site space % - minimum	10.6	n/a
Setbacks (m) – minimum:		
Front	0.48*	3 or 0
Rear	1.19*	3 or 0
Side (east)	0	3 or 0
Side (west)	0	3 or 0
Parking - minimum	0*	115 (existing Schedule C) 45 (draft new Schedule C)
Visitor parking (minimum) included in the overall units	0*	8 (existing Schedule C) 8 (draft new Schedule C)
Internal ramp slope (%) – maximum	15	15
Bicycle parking stalls (minimum)		
Class 1	70*	75(existing Schedule C)
Class 2	6	75(draft new Schedule C)

Community Consultation

Consistent with the *Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variances Applications*, on September 28, 2017 the application was referred for a 30-day comment period to the Burnside Gorge CALUC. A letter dated January 29, 2017 is attached to this report.

This Application proposes variances, therefore, in accordance with the City's *Land Use Procedures Bylaw*, it requires notice, sign posting and a meeting of Council to consider the variances.

ANALYSIS

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

The *Official Community Plan (OCP)* identifies this property within Development Permit Area 7A: Corridors – Douglas Street and Blanshard Street. The OCP, *Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP)*, and the relevant design guidelines support mixed-use buildings up to approximately 15 storeys that revitalize areas of commercial use along corridors through high-quality architecture,

landscape and urban design in order to enhance their appearance, achieve coherent design along corridors, strengthen commercial viability and encourage pedestrian use.

There are aspects of the design such as the animated ground floor commercial space with floor to ceiling glazing, building articulation, materials and outdoor patio space that comply with the design guidelines. The proposal would also help revitalize the neighbourhood; however, there are some concerns with the proposal from a site planning, circulation and design-perspective primarily due to the height and density being proposed for a 556m² lot (conventional size lot for a single-family dwelling).

Should Council support this application, staff recommend for Council's consideration that the proposal be reviewed by the Advisory Design Panel. Staff recommend that the Panel should pay particular attention to:

- the transition to the buildings along Princess Avenue, especially the brick building to the east
- overall massing, architectural elements and finishes to ensure integration with local neighbourhood
- type of glazing on the building.

Tree Preservation Bylaw and Urban Forest Master Plan

There are no Tree Preservation Bylaw impacts with this application.

Regulatory Considerations

Parking Variance

The applicant is requesting to reduce the required number of parking spaces from 115 to 0 (under the existing Schedule C – Off-street Parking Requirements), and proposing a one-vehicle driveway and aisle capacity.

In addition, the applicant is proposing to reduce the required number of Class 1 bicycle parking spaces from 75 to 70, and Class 2 bicycle parking spaces from eight to six. All bicycle parking spaces would be vertical, which is strongly discouraged. At least 50% of bicycle parking spaces should be horizontal and accessible for electric bike owners, disabled persons and the elderly, especially when there is a significant parking variance. Providing at least 50% horizontal bicycle parking spaces is being recommended in the new draft Schedule C.

To offset vehicle and bicycle parking variances the applicant is proposing a privately-run electric vehicle share program which would include six electric cars, 12 scooters and two electric bikes for residents and the community. There would be an employee onsite managing the car share program; however, there is no guarantee that a vehicle car share program would operate for the life of the building.

A Parking Study was prepared by WATT Consulting Group. The study concludes that *the site's transportation characteristics and proximity to downtown coupled with the electric Vehicle Sharing Program could allow the proponent to manage the building without any parking supply.* The study further acknowledges that there are risks associated with providing no parking; however, the study states that through research, observation and analysis that actions can be taken to significantly reduce the need for owning a vehicle at 736 Princess Avenue and this would be through providing a car sharing program onsite.

Under the new draft Schedule C, the recommended parking requirements for rental housing have been significantly reduced to 0.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit (from 1.3 parking spaces per dwelling unit), and the parking requirement would be reduced to 45 parking spaces. This recommended parking ratio is a result of substantial review and research associated with the City's Off-street Parking Review currently underway. Both the vehicle and bicycle parking variances and proposed one-vehicle driveway are not supported by staff because of the potential on-street parking impacts that would likely result on the surrounding streets and the circulation impacts onsite.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed mixed-use building at 736 Princess Avenue complies with planning objectives for the Douglas and Blanshard Street corridor. The proposal is also consistent with the design guidelines pertaining to animated ground floor commercial space, building articulation, materials and outdoor patio space; however, staff have concerns with the overall built form on a small site, onsite circulation, and the magnitude of parking variances and the potential impact this could have on the nearby streets. Staff recommend for Council's consideration that this application is declined.

ALTERNATE MOTION 1

That Council direct staff to work with the applicant to revise the proposal to comply with the OCP and reduce the magnitude of the parking variance and refer the application to the Advisory Design Panel, with a request that the Panel pay particular attention to:

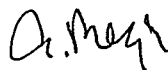
1. The transition to the buildings along Princess Avenue.
2. Overall massing, architectural elements and finishes to ensure the integration with the local neighbourhood.
3. Type of glazing on the building.


ALTERNATE MOTION 2

That Council direct staff to explore and report back on the feasibility of developing a new designation **or** mechanism to enable purpose built rental **and/or** affordable housing at densities above what is anticipated in the OCP.

Respectfully submitted,



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Development Services Division




Jonathan Tinney, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
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Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:


Jan 17, 2018

List of Attachments:

- Appendix A: Subject Map
- Appendix B: Aerial Map
- Appendix C: Plans date stamped November 23, 2017
- Appendix D: Letter from applicant to Mayor and Council dated July 21, 2017 and November 17, 2017
- Appendix E: Letter from First National Financial LLP dated October 20, 2017
- Appendix F: Community Association Land Use Committee Comments dated January 29, 2017
- Appendix G: Parking study prepared by WATT Consulting Group dated November 14, 2017.