


ABSTRACT

 301-1106 Cook Street
 Victoria, BC V8V 3Z9

 T 250 883 5579 F 250 995 8611
 abstractdevelopments.com

November 30, 2017

 City of Victoria
 No. 1 Centennial Square
 Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Attn: Mayor and Members of Council

 Re: **Response to Committee of the Whole Resolution**
 Rezoning and Development Permit Application
 1201 Fort Street and 1050 Pentrelew Place

Dear Mayor and Members of Council,

This letter is being provided to offer a summary of the revisions made to the development proposal at 1201 Fort Street in response to the resolution passed by Committee of the Whole on October 26, 2017. A more detailed description and explanation of the Responses can be found in the letter dated November 14, 2017 by the project team.

That the applicant be referred to staff to work with the applicant to address the following issues, and report to Committee of the Whole:

1. *Revise the density, massing, height and setbacks of the building to the south, to provide a more sensitive transition to the ground-oriented adjacent and nearby properties and mitigate concerns relating to overlook.*

Response:

- Project density has been reduced by 6,932 sq. ft. (FSR now at 1.29, consistent with the Official Community Plan guidelines)
- Total number of units has been reduced from 94 down to 86.
- Setback of Building B from the south property line has increased by 5'-0" (resulting in a total setback of 20'-4").
- Southern facing balconies have been reduced in size to limit overlook onto neighbouring property.
- Southern most townhouse is now setback 25.17m (82'-7") from the south property line, an increase of 1.59m (5'-2").
- See item #2 for additional considerations made to improve the transition to the traditional residential neighbourhood along Pentrelew Place.

2. *Revise the massing, height and visual appearance of the townhouses, and remove the rooftop decks, to provide a more sensitive transition to the Pentrelew Place frontage and nearby properties.*

Response:

- 1 additional townhouse has been removed, resulting in 9 units along Pentrelew Place.
- Roof top decks have been removed
- Third floor of townhouses has been removed
- Height of townhouses have been reduced to a maximum of 7.60m, consistent with the height of an R1-B zoned single-family dwelling.

- Increased the front yard setback for all townhouses to no less than 4.20m, consistent with other single-family dwellings along Pentrelew Place.
 - Minimum separation between townhouse buildings is now 5.0m, which is 2.0m greater than the minimum required between two single-family dwellings in the R1-B zone.
 - Separation between Townhouse Buildings D and E has increase to 6.0m to provide additional breathing room for the Public Pathway.
3. *Revise the design and visual appearance of the driveway access on Pentrelew Place.*
- Response:
- Main entrance and lobby has been visually enhanced to diminish the prominence of the driveway
 - Zelkova trees (change in species from previous plan) line the pedestrian and accessible pathways leading to the main building entrance.
 - Additional landscaping has been designed to capture the additional setback created by eliminating a townhouse.
 - Overall sightlines towards the main entrance have been enhanced.
4. *Consider fixtures for public use and enjoyment in the landscape plan for the greenspace bounded by the proposed pathway, Fort Street and the property to the east subject to CPTED principles.*
- Response:
- Two benches have been incorporated into the landscaping near Fort Street
 - An informal seating wall has been incorporated at the entrance to the public pathway on Pentrelew Place
 - CPTED principles have been followed (see letter dated Nov. 14, 2017 and details provided by the landscape architect).
5. *Demonstrate how the application is consistent with the objectives of Development Permit 7b that is to encourage buildings that enhance the heritage character of the Fort Street corridor.*
- See staff report.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Mike Miller
President & Founder

14 November 2017

City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC
V8W 1P6

Attn.: Mayor & Council

Re: REVISION 5: 1201 Fort Street ReZoning & Development Permit Application

Based on the October 26th Committee of the Whole motion to refer this project back to staff, the design team has made significant changes at the request of Abstract Developments to address the points of concern raised at the meeting. The changes have been jointly prepared by Cascadia Architects (CAS), Murdoch de Greeff Landscape Architects (MDI), and Zebra Design (ZD), and are summarized below as point form responses to issues flagged in the motion:

Zoning Application Comments

1. *Revise the density, massing, height and setbacks of the building to south, to provide a more sensitive transition to the ground-oriented adjacent and nearby properties and mitigate concerns relating to overlook;*
 - a. **CAS Bubble 1** In addition to the previous changes that reduced building B's height by a full storey, the team has refined the shape of the south end further. The minimum setback has been enlarged from 4.67m to 6.2m – an increase of 5ft. to a new total of more than 20ft. from the south property line. The corner balconies of the south projection have also been removed to limit the balconies to the area where possible overlook is limited to the roof of the neighbour. It should be noted that this projection is only 42ft. wide. The remainder of Building B's south end, which is opposite the neighbouring backyard has always been setback much further – 13.52m (more than 44ft.) from the property line to maintain a comfortable separation from the neighbour's outdoor space and preserve the heavy screen of mature evergreen trees that exists on the property line.
2. *Revise the massing, height and visual appearance of the townhouses, and remove the rooftop decks, to provide a more sensitive transition to the Pentrelew Place frontage and nearby properties;*
 - a. **ZD** The townhouses have been amended by the following changes:
 - i. Removing one full unit from building D, addressing overall massing and density of the townhouses into three blocks of three units, with frontage lengths comparable to the side elevation of the house that is opposite across the street. This also opens up further the gaps between townhouse blocks, allowing more 'breathing space' along the street frontage.
 - ii. Removing the rooftop decks and third storeys completely from all three townhouse buildings.
 - iii. Reducing the ceiling height on the upper floors from 9 to 8 feet, on all townhouse buildings.
 - iv. Altering the roof pitch, on all townhouse buildings.
 - v. Removing dormers on the Pentrelew Place side (front), on all townhouse buildings.
 - vi. Lowering buildings D and E into the ground.

- vii. Relocating the buildings, moving them further away from Pentrelew Place, to have a setback from the sidewalk at Pentrelew that is equivalent to the houses across the street.
- viii. Adding gable roofs on the rear of each townhouse block.
- ix. Adding windows to the north elevations of each townhouse block.
- x. Extending or “wrapping” the planters around the north sides of the buildings to provide additional visual interest and enhance the sides of the buildings.

By these measures, physical and calculated building heights have been modified such that all three townhouse buildings meet the 7.6M maximum height requirement of the R1-B zoning for single family homes, consistent with the neighbourhood. The setbacks and building heights are now both very similar to single family dwellings in the surrounding area.

These changes also increase the “friendliness” of the elevations of the buildings adjacent to the pedestrian walkway (and at the rear of the buildings as well), making them more appealing and aiding transition from the Multi-Unit Residential Buildings (MURSBs) through to the Pentrelew Place frontage and neighbouring residences.

3. *Revise the design and visual appearance of the driveway access on Pentrelew Place;*

- a. **MDI** The vehicle and pedestrian access to Building B from Pentrelew Place have been enhanced. The goal was to enhance the visibility of the entrance from the street (pedestrians and vehicles) while at the same time, trying to soften/create a visual buffer of the upper floors of Building B. From the street, the large oak tree and understory landscape will define the southern edge of the streetscape and the driveway entrance. Zelkova trees (change in species from previous plan) line the pedestrian walkway and accessible path that lead to the main building entrance. The trees are vase shaped and will frame a visual path to the entrance. Zelkova grow to 15m in height and will also screen the upper floors of the building. Lastly, the trees create an aesthetically pleasing spatial threshold along the entrance paths. The accessible pedestrian walkway has remained to the north due to site grades and the way the road drops in elevation to the south. The arbour gate structure has been wrapped around the entry area with an integrated privacy screen to provide privacy for the first-floor unit. Planting material on both sides of the screen will ground the structure in the landscape. The overall effect is to create clear sightlines to entrance.

4. *Consider fixtures for public use and enjoyment in the landscape plan for the greenspace bounded by the proposed pathway, Fort Street and the property to the east subject to CPTED principles;*

- a. **MDI** Benches have been integrated into the public pathway between Fort St. and Pentrelew Place. 2 benches have been incorporated into the landscape area (Garry Oak succession planting) closer to Fort St. and a seating wall has been integrated into the Pentrelew Place path access point. The benches have been sited adjacent to the path for CPTED principals and aim to minimize private vs. public conflicts. The intent is to provide seating that is highly visible and not hidden at the back of the landscape. It also is integrated into the design such that the bench associated with the bicycle parking functions to separate the bike racks from the path but can also be used by cyclists to place bags or backpacks while they lock/unlock their bike. A garbage can has also been added within the SRW at Fort Street. This addition will help keep the walkway clean and is conveniently located for both path and Fort St. pedestrians.

5. *Demonstrate how the application is consistent with the objectives of Development Permit 7b that is to encourage buildings that enhance the heritage character of the Fort Street corridor;*
 - a. **CAS** DP Area 7B is intended to establish objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential development along Fort Street. The revised application continues to respond to the principles of DP Area 7b as follows:
 - i. The project continues to prioritize enhancement of the pedestrian experience along Fort Street through the primary site planning decision to extend public realm improvements along Fort Street and through the site as a right-of-way walking path and park space (DPA 7B item 3b, 4b & Neighbourhood Plan item 1.9).
 - ii. The project also continues to maintain the vista of this 'de-facto' park space for people and traffic leaving downtown on Fort Street, by keeping the majority of significant trees that exist at the north end of the site. This responds to the Core Area plan requirement 6.18 to maintain visual points of interest and landmark views in the City. This commitment to maintaining the 'leafy character' of the site is also a direct response to section 2.6 of the neighbourhood plan.
 - iii. The project still realizes the latent potential along Fort Street for intensification of transit-oriented multi-family residential uses (DPA 7B 3c,d) but, as stated previously, moves building A further north to address Fort Street more directly. Responding directly to planning staff recommendations the lobby is now prominently located and visible on Fort Street. The revised architectural expression is more traditional and grounded in a character reflecting the Rockland Neighbourhood vernacular. The building elevations are organized in traditional bays defined by vertical brick piers that respond both to the scale of the mature trees and to the historical stone and masonry materiality of Rockland. The result is a presence on Fort Street that helps to achieve a "cohesive design and enhanced appearance through high-quality architecture, landscape and urban design responsiveness" (4c) and acknowledges more directly the traditional architectural styles expressed in some of the heritage home structures along Fort Street (3e).
 - b. **ZD** The architectural detailing and ornamentation of these townhouse buildings provides a traditional look that blends with both the Rockland neighbourhood and the Fort Street heritage corridor, in a style which is responsive to the historic context of the older buildings and transitions from the MURBs to the neighbouring existing detached homes.
6. In addition to the changes made to directly address the Committee of the Whole motion, the following alterations have also been made to improve the application:
 - a. **CAS Bubble 6.1** Building A construction is now anticipated to be concrete construction and the data table has been updated to reflect the building code classification change.
 - b. **CAS Bubble 6.2** The project unit count has been reduced to 86 units. This has been accomplished by re-planning the fourth and fifth floors of Building A to reduce the number of units and diversify the unit mix further. Previously, L4 and L5 contained 11 units each. L4 is reduced to 9 units and L5 to 7, for a total reduction of 6 units. Additionally, several bicycle rooms previously located at the basement level have now been consolidated at grade between the buildings in the former amenity room and Unit 104 in Building B. This provides preferred at-grade access to secure bicycle storage and the new bicycle room will also have a bike maintenance station. Elimination of unit 104 further reduces the unit count by 1 unit, to 86.
 - c. **CAS Bubble 6.3** In addition to the elimination of a townhouse unit and the Bldg. A L4 and L5 changes, minor changes have been made to the shape of floor plates in both buildings A and B, in order to reduce the project FSR to 1.29:1 – reflective of the accurate blend of OCP urban and traditional residential FSR targets across the site. These changes do not alter setbacks or view corridors, but do

create small adjustments to the average grade calculations for both buildings, as noted in the calculation tables. Overall building heights have been maintained for buildings A and B. Site Coverage has been reduced to 42.6% and Open Site Space has been increased to 56%.

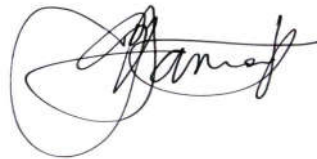
These changes have resulted in a total reduction of 7 condominiums and 1 townhouse. The parking has dropped from 121 to 119 stalls on site, improving the parking ratio to 1.38:1.

The team has carefully reviewed this latest motion from Committee of the Whole, in letter and in spirit, and has worked with City Staff to fully address the intended objectives. If you have any questions or require further clarification of any part of the application, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,
CASCADIA ARCHITECTS INC.



Peter Johannknecht, Architect AIBC, LEED AP
Principal



Gregory Damant, Architect AIBC LEED AP
Principal

Murdoch deGreeff Inc.



Scott Murdoch
Registered Landscape Architect

Zebra Design & Interiors Group Inc.



Rus Collins