

**MINUTES OF THE
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
HELD WEDNESDAY JUNE 9, 2021**

1. THE CHAIR CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 12:00 PM

Present: Marilyn Palmer (Chair), Devon Skinner, Sean Partlow, Ruth Dollinger, Joseph Kardum, Brad Forth, Pamela Madoff, Ben Smith

Absent: Matty Jardine

Staff Present: Charlotte Wain – Senior Planner, Urban Design
Chelsea Medd - Planner
Alena Hickman – ADP Secretary

2. MINUTES

Minutes from the Meeting held May 26, 2021.

Motion:

It was moved by Marilyn Palmer seconded by Joseph Kardum, that the minutes from the meeting held February 24, 2021 be approved as amended.

Carried Unanimously

3. APPLICATIONS

3.1 Development Permit with Variance Application No. 000593 for 1693 and 1699 Fort Street

The City is considering a proposal to construct a six-storey building with 23 units of student rental housing.

Applicant meeting attendees:

Erica Sangster
Carly Abrahams

D'Ambrosio Architecture
Aryze Developments Inc.

Chelsea Medd provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- height and mass
- building separation distance and transition
- streetwall
- landscaping
- any other aspects of the proposal on which the ADP chooses to comment.

Erica Sangster provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal. Carly Abrahams provided the panel with a detailed presentation of the landscaping plan.

The Panel asked the following questions of clarification:

- What is the size of the larger windows being proposed?
 - 6ft by 7ft tall.
- Will those be in final frames?
 - Yes, with a structural post between them.
- Is the cladding all on the same plane or are the darker portions set back?
 - There would be a slight difference in plane because the materials are slightly different.
- What is the method of attachment and are you worried about rust stains?
 - It would be bolted onto girts, you won't see the connection points. No, we are not, they do have an s-lock.
- Do you have a strategy to select the artist for the art detailing spot you have held?
 - We are going for of a West Coast feel and are in talks with many local artists.
- Will the art element in the bike room be setback?
 - Yes, on the back wall.
- Have you considered the bike room may be an eyesore where it's located at street level and if crime prevention could be an issue?
 - We looked at the Atrium building which also has bike room on street level. High visibility ensures that it's well kept, it will get a lot of sunlight during the day and is convenient.
- Are the washrooms co-compliant?
 - They are based on built compact washrooms, they are not adaptable and do not have accessibility.
- Are 8 parking stalls sufficient for this size of building? Including garbage and loading?
 - We have a separate garbage room off the parking area. We looked at a large amount of data, specifically for this location in relation to the large post secondary institutions and there are plenty of public transit options. Tenants will also get a MODO membership. We have extra bike parking as well.
- Are you proposing new trees for Fort Street?
 - Yes, we are proposing 4 new street trees. We have picked out our species of trees but, the City of Victoria has requested that they decide what the boulevard trees will be. We are working on saving that one tree on Belcher Ave.
- What size of Gary Oak tree would you propose?
 - Usually 9-10ft or the biggest we can find.
- Has an arborist looked at the trees you are trying to retain on the adjacent property and given input into critical root zones?

- Yes, we have an arborist report. But I don't believe the City has received the arborist report yet so it is still to be reviewed by the Parks department and staff.
- Because this building is student rental will the parking area be secured?
 - I think it will be a variant, we are not sure how the zone will be drafted yet. There would be a legal agreement securing them as student rentals.
- Will the units be furnished?
 - Yes.
- Have window treatments been considered?
 - Yes, all units will have blinds as part of the furnishings.
- What was the thought process behind picking the spaces for the bike room and amenity space?
 - We wanted to put the amenity room on the corner to feel more publicly connected. It also gets morning to midday light on the patio. We tried to keep them distances from other residential buildings as well.
- What is the closest building face on the south side and what is the setback?
 - There is over 7meters between the south side and Belcher Ave, and the building to the west on Fort Street is 14meters.
- Is that pathway near the Gary oaks restricted access?
 - That pathway is a maintenance path. It is not intended for circulation.
- What is the main reason for restricting it?
 - It is meant to be a landscaping space, because it's coming off a back alleyway, we wanted to create green to offset the asphalt but didn't want to create any CPTED issues.
- Is there an elevation to describes what the pedestrian experience along Belcher Avenue is?
 - There is about 4ft between the patio space and sidewalk.
- Are the windows operable?
 - Yes, the bedrooms and living rooms have operable windows.
- Given that student housing is usually built on campuses, how do you ensure that students can afford to live in market housing.
 - We have spoken to Uvic and Camosun about a potential partnership and what that could look like. As far as rental rates they would be inline with rental rates of dorm housing.
- What do you believe you are giving back to the City in response to the size of your ask?
 - We believe it's a domino effect. Students end up in markets where they are unable to flourish, purposeful student rentals are important. Students are currently residing in single-family dwellings. This would free up these single-

family homes for other renters. This is a unique and custom solution for this site and we think this is a good fit.

Panel members discussed:

- No concern with parking variance
- Concern about the lack of information on the art piece as it will be highly visible
- Concern this proposal is asking too much
- Appreciation for the playfulness of the façade and overall look of the building
- Appreciation for the bikes being on display
- Support for the street wall design
- Concern about the tree on Belcher Avenue not being retained
- Appreciation for the effort put into the landscaping
- Desire for extended fencing along surface parking
- This proposal is appropriate for this specific site
- Concerned that the requested rezoning doesn't meet what the allowances are in the proposed new zone
- Would feel more comfortable with this proposal if it met the zoning requirements
- Discomfort when it comes to the land use policies regarding this application
- Panel would like to see an Advisory Planning Commission
- Concerned with the lack of setback to the South
- Not fair for ADP to be looking at land use policies
- The design is well crafted for the location
- Colour scheme is well thought out
- Concern there is lost opportunity with the boulevard landscaping
- Support for the form, massing and height of the proposal in it's context.

Motion:

It was moved by Joseph Kardum, seconded by Devon Skinner, that Development Permit with Variance Application No. 000593 for 1693 and 1699 Fort Street be approved with the following changes:

- Requirement that the details of the public visible art component are resolved prior to the application proceeding to COTW.
- Consideration the adding of additional amenity space on the ground level on the SW corner
- Improving security and CPTED of the under building parking
- Encourage the applicant to work with the City to provide additional shrub planting on the Fort St Boulevard
- Resolve the loss of the tree on Belcher with either a new tree or an enhanced planting scheme, particularly adjacent to the amenity space
- Consider the inclusion of enhanced paving at the main entrance
- Consideration for the alternative species along the south boundary to provide more effective screening.

Pamela Madoff left the meeting before voting.

Carried Unanimously

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Advisory Design Panel meeting of June 9, 2021 was adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Marilyn Palmer, Chair