

June 3, 2022

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

Attn.: Mayor & Council

Re: 1039/1043 Meares Street Rezoning and Development Permit Application

Cascadia Architects is pleased to assist Jawl Residential Ltd. and Fort Properties Ltd. with this Development Tracker submission in preparation for a Rezoning and Development Permit application for the construction of a 6-storey 50-unit residential building. The site is comprised of two properties: 1039 Meares Street and 1043 Meares Street. The details of the proposal described in this application carefully respond to the relevant OCP directions, Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, City of Victoria Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential, and applicable sections of the Downtown Core Area Plan. The group's vision for this application is to deliver a project for the future which addresses energy performance, electrification, and alternative modes of transportation. This site is a unique opportunity to provide a net gain in homes that advance the city's goals of sustainable, car-lite development. In preparing this application, the design team has received preliminary input from neighbours, the Fairfield Gonzales CALUC, City staff, and specialist consultants, including a certified arborist, transportation planner, landscape architect, and civil and geotechnical engineers. The public consultation and review process to-date included the following meetings:

- Various individual meetings and correspondence with neighbours and the CALUC
- Pre-CALUC Neighbour Group Meeting – March 28, 2022
- Multiple Planning Meetings – with City of Victoria staff from Planning, Engineering, Parks and Transportation



Meaningful changes to the design have already been implemented based on the consultation meetings, including:

- **Location of water and sewer connections**
- **Increased bicycle parking**
- **View impact mitigation to the neighboring building**
- **Increase in number of trees on site along Meares Street**
- **Permeable pavers on boulevard for BC Hydro PMT access**
- **Accessible floorplan option available for designated unit(s)**
- **Preservation of trees and landscape buffer on neighboring properties**
- **Enhanced setbacks to building to south and west**

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Existing Zoning, Site Characteristics, and the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan:

The two parcels encompassed by the proposal cover 1352m² in total area. They are zoned as R3-1 Multiple Dwelling District lots which permits density up to 1.2 FSR and height up to 6 storeys. The lots are currently used for surface parking. Located in a designated Core Residential area of the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, the proposal neighbours an existing 4-storey buildings to the west, and a 6-storey BC Housing building is under construction to the east. Directly across Meares Street is an overheight 6-storey mixed use building, and to the south is another 4-storey residential building. The Core Residential Area allows 6-storeys and, 20m in building height. This area is easily accessible via transit and the AAA bicycle network, and is valued for its proximity to downtown, amenities and local parks.

Description of the Proposal:

The proposed development is a 50-unit building with a mix of studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 2-bedroom plus den units. By providing a variety of unit sizes, with larger balconies and decks, this project will help to support a diverse population, in a walkable neighbourhood with easy access to goods and services. The building is sited close to the north and east property lines where the adjacent BC Housing project has a blank wall. This serves to minimize overlook and noise impacts and maximize light and views for the buildings to the south and west. The material expression is elegant, composed of panelized warm grey durable cladding with custom patterned balcony glass that relates to the expressive cladding of Mosaic building across Meares St. The rest of the exterior palette extends the refined architectural expression, using high-quality finishes, including cementitious finishes, metal cladding, clear glass, and full height glazing on the ground floor facing the street.

The primary design initiatives which reference the **Official Community Plan and Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan** can be summarized as follows:

- The proposal reflects the intent of the Official Community Plan as well as the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan with a height of 6-storeys, surface parking, and a density (FSR) of 2.5:1, below the maximum threshold of 3:1.
- The massing and material finish have been crafted to suit the neighborhood's multi-unit buildings and mixed-use buildings.
- This building aligns with northwest Fairfield's predominance of multi-family housing with units of varying sizes to appeal to a diversity of occupants.
- The proposal introduces a semi-commercial ground-oriented live and work unit which increases the visible activity and community connection around the building and strengthens semi-commercial uses that characterize this block of Meares.
- Through thoughtful massing, the building's alternating rhythm of balconies provide articulation and breaks up the massing. Large windows and balconies provide eyes to the street. Resident amenities include a roof top garden space, and the south-facing level two units have full walk-out patios that provide additional livability for those units, and landscaped screening for privacy to and from the building to the south.
- To take advantage of Fairfield's active transportation network, this proposal provides more bicycle parking than required. A ground level bike room with secure access to bicycle storage will serve occupants and visitors.
- Fourteen new trees on the ground level (5), level two (6) and roof deck (3) deep planters, will add to the city's urban forest canopy.

- This proposal strives to enhance the transition between downtown and single-family and multi-residential buildings to south. The strong architectural design is compatible in character and quality with the Fairfield context.

Transportation and Infrastructure:

The project is exceptionally well situated and served by City of Victoria infrastructure. Schools, parks and recreation facilities, as well as shopping destinations are all within walking or rolling distance of the site. The future residents will have a range of transportation options available to them. Infrastructure for vehicles, walking, and particularly cycling are immediately accessible from the property, with the newly constructed Fort Street and Vancouver Street AAA cycling corridors less than a block away. The location is a biker and walker's paradise with a bike score of 100 and a walk score of 97.

The project will include 22 surface parking stalls accessed from the driveway at the northwest corner of the lot. Due to the redevelopment, two existing driveways will be consolidated into one new driveway. The parking lot includes a total of two accessible parking stalls; one being larger to accommodate van parking, in accordance with the updated City of Victoria parking bylaw.

A well-appointed space located in a prominent location on the main level of the building provides those using bicycles for recreation and commuting, a quality area for storing and maintaining their bikes. A total of 74 long-term bicycle stalls (20% above Schedule C), including 8 cargo bike stalls, will support individual and family cyclists. 8 short-term bicycle stalls are also provided in front of the building and along the frontage, 33% above Schedule C... There is also a ground floor bike kitchen and bike (and dog) wash station, as added features for residents.

The PMT is located on the property and access for BC Hydro maintenance is provided via a permeable boulevard crossing, to minimize impacts to public infrastructure.

Project Benefits and Amenities:

This project will bring 50 new units of mid-range condo housing stock to the city, through a carefully designed building. The simple and elegant design is well-suited to the neighborhood and will contribute further vibrancy to the community. The frontage improvements include enhanced green space and tree canopy which will be complemented by roof deck tree planters. The vehicle access and surface parking have been designed to minimize impacts to existing large trees on the southwest side of the site. While it is estimated that five trees may be removed, a total of 14 new trees will be planted, to provide a net benefit to the urban forest.

In addition, opportunities for interaction and gathering amongst residents are accommodated through a rooftop amenity space. This area will include spaces for social interaction, vegetable gardening and food preparation.

Safety and Security:

This development will introduce a new population of residents in the neighbourhood and contribute additional 'eyes on the street'. The overall design has considered passive surveillance of the property, and views to all common areas and access points. The ground floor unit will have an individual front door and patio, re-enforcing the street presence with its landscaped area as an active space. Site lighting illuminates the areas around the entire building to promote safety and visibility of landscaped areas. It is important to note that this lighting will be shielded and kept at a lower mounting height in order to avoid glare and light pollution to neighbouring properties. Lastly, access to the property will be secured and available only to the residents and permitted guests.

Sustainable Features:

The following is a list of green building initiatives that will be deployed within the project:

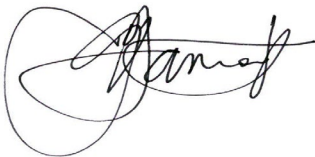
- No existing dwellings or residents displaced during construction
- Net Positive Housing Creation
- Meeting Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code
- Site is located within 250m of Vancouver Bike Greenway, Fort Street Bike Lanes and Vancouver Bike Connector to Pandora and Wharf Street Bike Infrastructure
- High efficiency LED lighting throughout common areas and homes
- Electronic access controlled secure bike storage at ground level on Meares Street with cargo bike.
- Electrical outlets for electric bicycle charging locations within bicycle storage
- CCTV cameras for secure bike parking
- A bicycle wash station and repair stand in convenient location on Meares Street
- Robust Welcome Package to incentivize car light lifestyles emphasizing active transportation opportunities
- All 22 parking stalls to have installed EV car charging at no cost to home owner – installed at building completion
- Fresh air ducted to each home
- All in suite appliances to be electric including induction range
- High efficiency common domestic hot water boiler system
- Stormwater Management Plan implemented during construction
- Construction Waste Diversion Plan implemented during construction

In preparing this development permit application package the team has carefully considered community input, the relevant OCP objectives, the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, and applicable sections of the Downtown Core Area Plan. It is our belief that the design for this project is responsive to the neighbourhood context and proposes timeless architecture that will contribute positively to the community experience.

If you have any questions or require further clarification of any part of this application, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

CASCADIA ARCHITECTS INC.



Gregory Damant, Architect AIBC, RAIC, LEED AP
Principal



Peter Johannknecht, Architect AIBC, RAIC, LEED AP
cert. Passive House Designer, Principal

Our File No: 122.11
June 3, 2022Alec Johnston, Planning Department
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Re: Meares Street Condo Project (1039 & 1043 Meares Street, Victoria, BC)

Landscape Design Rationale

Murdoch de Greeff Inc in collaboration with the Jawl Residential Ltd team including Cascadia Architects and JE Anderson Engineering, has developed plans for the proposed development at 1039 & 1043 Meares Street. The property is located within the Downtown Public Realm 'New Town' District and currently consists of an existing parking lot surrounded by residential uses and the Meares Street semi-commercial corridor.

Landscape Description:

An integrated design approach has been used for the site in an effort to create a high quality public realm interface, integrate multi-modal transportation accessibility and leverage opportunities for green space and urban forestry values. The development includes improvements to the streetscape and associated public realm along the Meares Street frontage. A new sidewalk, pedestrian focused green space, tree plantings, easily accessible bicycle parking and integrated connections to the site have been introduced to help create a unique sense of place and vibrant interface to the boarding downtown core.

The landscape plan seeks to create an inviting, safe, pedestrian friendly public realm that fits both the neighbourhood and the broader community. The plan includes level access and covered entries framed by Architectural wall elements, integrating textural artistic finishes, and new specimen trees and amenity plantings. This contributes to creating a new pedestrian friendly street frontage and an effective transition to the development site. New street tree plantings help integrate the build form into the urban context by appropriate use of scale, seasonal interest and giving a sense of comfort for the pedestrian, in both the public road right of way and private entry/access points.

High quality surfacing materials, such as unit pavers, have been proposed in front of the street level entries. This type of materiality is used in combination with Architectural wall elements, site furnishings and plantings to further contribute to the site's sense of place and pedestrian favoured environment.

The design respects Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles by open sightlines, defined public-semi-public-private edges, integrated lighting and activated street frontage.

Urban Forest:

A key element of the landscape plan is the enhancement of the urban forest. Proposed new tree plantings contribute to urban biodiversity, improve habitat value in the long term and offer 'green' views for the immediate and surround residential uses. The plan includes 15 new tree plantings, 3 of which are on the municipal boulevard. Generous soil volumes provided in the design for each tree will support small to medium scale trees onsite that will grow long into the future. New street trees on Meares Street will be designed to leverage the spatial opportunities and soil volume access for medium to large urban trees. Trees will be selected for their aesthetic values and the tree canopy cover they provide while also providing species diversity. Species diversity is an important consideration for landscape resiliency against climate change.

Soil volumes for newly proposed trees has been designed to meet or exceed the City of Victoria, Tree Protection Bylaw criteria. Including the trees proposed for the Level 2 canopy and terrace spaces. Neighbouring adjacent trees have been retained where possible and follow the Project Arborists recommendations. The newly proposed tree species and quantities will meet or exceed the City of Victoria, tree minimum lot requirement and replacement tree requirements. The project achieves no net loss in trees for both the onsite design and municipal boulevard. Appropriate use of root deflectors will be incorporated in the boulevard where required.

Water Conservation:


Landscape plantings will include native and appropriate non-native plants that are adapted to site conditions, climate, and design intent. The use of native or regionally adapted vegetation promotes regional identity and a sense of place, supports biodiversity, reduces pesticide use, and supports water conservation by minimizing the use of potable water for irrigation. A high-efficiency irrigation system will be used to reduce water demand in the landscape.

The design will seek to integrate plants and vegetation that are native to southern Vancouver Island, food-bearing or that provide pollinator habitats. The roof top space incorporates raised garden beds for small scale edible plant production and shared gardening opportunities.

In preparing this development permit application package, the team has considered the relevant OCP objectives and DP Area Design Guidelines. The design add positively to the community, enhances ecological values, and provides a landscape that integrates with the surrounding neighbourhood.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please feel free to contact our office.

Best regards,



Jonny Davis, BCSLA Intern