

June 05, 2022

Lisa Helps – Mayor
Marianne Alto, Stephen Andrew, Sharmarke Dubow, Ben Isitt, Jeremy Loveday, Sarah Potts, Charlayne Thornton-Joe, Geoff Young – Councillors
City of Victoria

**RE: Development Permit Application – 2300,2310 and 2312 Douglas Street
4 Storey Industrial Building**

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We have included this letter with our development permit application for a four storey industrial building in the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood.

1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The site is comprised of 3 legal lots with a total area of 1,500 square meters (16,150 square feet) situated on northwest corner of Douglas Street and Queens Avenue in the Burnside Neighbourhood.

We have proposed a 4 storey industrial building with light manufacturing spaces of various sizes at grade along the Douglas Street frontage. These spaces are designed to accommodate flexible sizes from 335 to 2,534 square feet and will allow future occupants to operate in accordance with the permitted uses of the existing M-1 Limited Light Industrial District uses. Parking for the building will be provided at-grade and will be completely enclosed and accessed from the Southwestern portion of the site off Queens Avenue. The remainder of the building is planned to accommodate a self-storage business, and we have taken steps to ensure that this space is viable for alternative uses at later stages of the building's life-cycle. This space is served by a building lobby that is accessed from Queens Street.

The building mass is inspired by stacked shipping containers that are commonly found in industrial environments, particularly those with a marine interface. We have included spontaneous selected glazing that serves the dual purposes of animating the street frontages and facilitating the potential future uses of the building.

The landscape design of the proposal responds to the building design, with the majority of the designed space falling within the Douglas Street and Queens Avenue frontages. The onsite landscape design includes decorative paving areas which demarcate the building entry points, as well as planting beds of native and adaptive species located along the

building face which provide a soft transition to the adjacent public realm. Temporary bicycle parking is provided under the building canopy along the Douglas Street frontage in close proximity to one of the building entrances.

The street frontages adhere to the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) catchments which apply (Douglas Street & Rock Bay), providing five large-canopy street trees along Douglas Street and three medium-canopy street trees along Queens Avenue. The inclusion of these street trees also follows the design recommendations put forth in the Burnside Neighbourhood Plan. These trees will be supplied with their required soil volumes via soil cells. Site furniture has been provided at the Douglas and Queens intersection as per the DCAP, creating a seating node in the expanded boulevard and sidewalk space.

2 PROJECT BENEFITS, AMENITIES

This proposal offers social, economic, and environmental benefits to the City of Victoria. Socially, it will provide small scale light manufacturing / artistic spaces that offer excellent exposure to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. These spaces will support the creative and artistic entrepreneurial segments of the local community by offering an additional venue to conduct their business.

Economic benefits of the project will occur in both the pre and post construction period. These will include:

- Economic benefits accruing to local business and service providers during the construction of the building.
- Numerous full-time light manufacturing employment opportunities in the units provided at grade.
- Several full-time managerial and operational jobs from the self-storage business.
- Enhanced and safer Neighbourhood.

This project also addresses an acute shortage of available storage spaces in the city. This shortage, and the resulting high rental rates, have several detrimental economic and social effects. The most notable of these is that self-storage users are compelled to take longer vehicle trips to the outskirts of the city in order to find vacancies.

Lastly, the proposed development will remediate a brownfield urban parking site and transform it into a distinctively designed building. Environmental contamination from past industrial uses will be remediated, and the new building will feature an enhanced building envelope and

sophisticated mechanical systems. A more comprehensive list of the “Green Building Features” can be found in Section 6 of this letter.

3 NEIGHBORHOOD

The immediate neighbourhood comprises of industrial on Queens Avenue and retail industrial on Douglas Street with some residential buildings further back from the site. The immediately adjacent properties are occupied by an existing U-Haul storage building to the East, an ice & water outlet to the North and a furniture store diagonally located on the southeast serving the Neighbourhood.

With this in mind, the urban design concept for the public realm of our proposal is to strengthen the street experience and to engage the public with an activated pedestrian experience, particularly along Douglas Street. The public experience is further improved by new trees and a strip of landscaping.

4 DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The property resides in Development Permit Area 10A: Rock Bay, and as such incorporates the design and development permit guidelines for that area, and the Downtown Core Area Plan more generally. Having said that it is worthwhile to highlight some of the specific guidelines that we have addressed, particularly where it was a result of consultation with various stakeholders.

Early in the design development stage, we solicited feedback on our preliminary designs from the Burnside Gorge Community Association. While the feedback was generally favorable, they offered a number of constructive comments that were incorporated into the submitted design, all of which are consistent with several of the Building Design Guidelines in the DCAP:

- Building height was reduced to conform to the existing M-1 zoning bylaw, and is consistent with DCAP policy 6.127.
- Additional glazing was added to the upper facades of the building, which improves the viability of alternative future uses of the building
- Grade elevation along Douglas Street was modified to incorporate a more open store-front appearance with additional glazing and entrance doors.
- Improved the Northern façade with more decorative cladding, despite the eventual zero-lot-line interface with the neighbouring property.

Further consultation with the Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department of the City of Victoria raised additional areas for improvement in our design:

- Relocated the glazed elevator to the interior of the building and expanded active industrial uses at grade fronting Douglas Street, consistent with DCAP policy 3.48
- Revised the Douglas & Queens corner profile of the building to create a more dramatic projection.

Lastly, in light of the fact that the City of Victoria zoning bylaw does not stipulate specific vehicle parking requirements for a self-storage land use, we commissioned a study by Bunt & Associates to assess an appropriate vehicle & bicycle parking provision for the property. This study relied on traffic counts at other self-storage buildings in both the Lower Mainland and the Capital Regional District. This study concluded that the 19 spaces provided in this proposal is more than sufficient for the proposed uses, however, it is less than the prescribed rate in the City of Victoria Zoning Bylaw and will therefore require a variance. In addition to this parking provision, we have implemented a number of Transportation Demand Management strategies:

- Providing 6 long-term & 6 short term bicycle parking spaces
- Providing end-of-trip facilities for cyclists
- Providing transit passes for employees to encourage the use of public transit for commutes

These strategies are consistent with the Transportation Demand Management framework outlines in the DCAP.

5 HERITAGE

No heritage impacts with this proposal.

6 GREEN BUILDING FEATURES

The self-storage portion of the building is semi-heated spaces with low heating and cooling demands. The following provides a breakdown of green features for each building system:

6.1 MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

- Heating and Ventilation (Storage Area): High Efficiency Natural Gas Fired Condensing Rooftop Air Handling Unit (91%) complete with economizer / heat recovery.

- Heating, Ventilation & Airconditioning (CRUs & Office Space): High efficiency Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) system (COP 4.2).
- Proper air distribution tests will be completed that test, adjust and balance the air distribution system.
- All motors (fan/blower/ECM/compressor) to be of high efficiency and help reduce the total electrical consumption.

6.2 PLUMBING SYSTEMS

- Heat Pump Domestic Hot Water Heater complete with electrical back-up and integral packaged controls.
- Ultra low-flow plumbing fixtures.

6.3 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

- LED Lighting Fixtures
- Occupancy / vacancy sensors
- Lighting control system for automatic dimming, vacancy sensing, time clock control and daylight harvesting.
- Light levels to meet recommended standards and to allow for LPD to meet or exceed ASHRAE requirements.
- External LED luminaires to be complete with full cut off to reduce light pollution. BES to perform light level calculations to ensure compliance with city requirements.
- Rooftop photovoltaic system roughed-in at a minimum.
- EV Charging Stations (Level 2) in 10% of parking stalls.

6.4 CONTROL SYSTEM

All HVAC equipment and lighting to be controlled via DDC System. Advantages include:

- Increase occupant comfort.
- Decrease operating costs and faster response time.
- Control sequences for energy savings.
- Digital interface with remote login capabilities.
- Energy management software.
- Less tenant maintenance required with Fault Detection Diagnostics.

7 INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed development requires addressing historic old services to be abandoned with new services being installed. The Douglas Street frontage requires only partial reconstruction as its current condition is generally good. The Queens frontage will require complete redevelopment.

Transportation has been reviewed with the cooperation of the City of Victoria Engineering Department as well as Bunt & Associates. The City has requested accommodation of narrowing the width of the Queens intersection facilitating bubs at the corners. This provides for a shorter crossing for pedestrians improving safety and increasing the amount of landscape area. The intersection geometry was designed with consideration of a WB17 (Tractor and Trailer) to still navigate the intersection. The City has indicated that the intersection will become fully signalized somewhere around 2024, potentially in concurrence with the project redevelopment. As such the civil engineering plans will be designed collaboratively with the City to accommodate the future works.

Storm drain service is available via the municipal storm drain system. No attenuation of the rainwater will be required. However the City does provide for tax credit system should the developer choose to do.

Sanitary sewers are available at property line and can provide for a new service connection. Old service connections are to be decommissioned. At this time sanitary sewer flow attenuation has not been requested and is not anticipated.

New water services for both domestic use and fire prevention use are anticipated. The City provides two separate water main networks for this. The Fire suppression system is of a higher pressure requiring a separate connection. A domestic connection will come from the lower pressure domestic system.

We thank you for your consideration. The entire project team look forward to presenting this application and advancing the review process with the Mayor and City Council, City Staff and the surrounding community.

Respectfully,



Helen Besharat, Principal
Architect AIBC FRAIC RID LEED BD+C
BFA Studio Architects



Chris Bradley, Principal
Bradley Group of Companies