

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

City of Victoria
Mayor & Council
c/o
Sustainable Planning and Community Development
#1 Centennial Square
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Re. Development Permit Application with Variance - 235 Russell Street

Mayor Helps & Members of Council;

Description of Proposal

The proposal for 235 Russell Street is to develop the property within the existing zone of M1 Limited Light Industrial District. By maintaining a diversity of employment lands and uses, the proposal meets the goals and objectives of Victoria's Official Community Plan (OCP). Further, the proposal is consistent with the Built Form described in the OCP.

The proposal is for three levels of warehouse space over parking and service areas at grade. The parking is behind the service areas and, thus, screened from the street. With one exception, the proposal meets all requirements of the existing zone. The requested variance is to waive the requirement for a loading space as described in the zone. Not only do we have no need for a loading space of this size, but to incorporate it into the building is aesthetically and functionally detrimental to the proposal. Such a loading space is more appropriate for larger sites with adequate circulation space.

Project Benefits and Amenities

Project benefits for this development will include an increase in light industrial space within the City of Victoria. Not only will jobs be created in the short-term during planning and construction, but the facility will generate considerable long-term employment. Given the increase in property value associated with the transformation from an empty lot to a functioning warehouse, a considerable tax benefit to the City will also occur in the form of increased property taxes.

Neighbourhood

235 Russell Street is located mid-block on the east side of Russell Street, south of the E&N railway. Adjacent to the north, south and west are industrial properties zoned as either M1 or M2 industrial. The adjacent properties are currently used for industrial purposes. The proposed development is in keeping with the immediate context.

Design and Development Permit Guidelines

235 Russell Street is within Development Permit Area 13 - Core Songhees, and is located in the western boundary of this area as it transitions to neighbouring Esquimalt. The primary objectives within this area include the revitalization of sites to increase vibrancy and strengthen commercial viability in this area and achieving a high quality of architectural design that is reflective of the local industrial context.



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Our proposal presents a well proportioned and articulated façade to Russell Street, in keeping with the context of adjacent masonry industrial buildings, that utilizes a varied patterning of smooth faced masonry and punched window openings, situated on a concrete base platform with architectural reveals, and capped with a simplified cornice variation in the masonry patterning. The flanking elevations are also of masonry construction with patterning extending 1.2m back from the street frontage and the remainder finished in simple running-bond pattern. All of the masonry will be finished with an elastomeric paint coating to provide primary defence against water ingress.

At street level the main entrance is expressed with a light and glassy storefront, and decorative metalwork is used to provide security to the main parking entrance and service areas.

The building address is incorporated into the cast-in-place concrete beam over the driveway entrance using architectural reveals and stand-off numbers.

We believe the design is consistent with the policies and guidelines for Fences, Gates, and Shutters, Buildings, Signs and Awnings, and for the Songhees local area that are referenced in the DP13 documentation.

Transportation

235 Russell Street is located just off the arterial of Esquimalt Road. The project meets the current Zoning Bylaw Schedule C – Off-Street Parking requirements for bicycles and for vehicles. Less than one block to the north are bike lanes. Bicycle facilities will be provided for workers. Bicycle parking will be located within a safe and secure facility onsite and be easily accessible. The increased bicycle parking will encourage the use of the existing and future network of greenways.

As described above, a variance to eliminate the requirement for a loading space is requested. The loading space is unnecessary. Given the size of the site and the abundance of onsite parking, movement of items to and from the building is easily handled by the proposed design. Any deliveries to and from the facility will be via the secure elevator lobby within the parking level. Deliveries will be infrequent and small and handled by standard vehicles. In the extremely unlikely event of a sizeable delivery needing a larger space, the property adjacent to the north has three loading docks. One of these docks is at the south end of that property (i.e., adjacent to the subject property) and is accessed from Russell

street, directly north of our access. That is, however unlikely, a delivery via an oversized vehicle could be received by the adjacent property.

Heritage

There is no building on the site. It is a paved and fenced empty lot.

Green Building Features

235 Russell will be constructed of high-quality and durable building materials to ensure it will be a long-lasting building capable of adaptive re-use. The load-bearing masonry exterior walls are a traditional approach for buildings of this type. The upper floor levels will be constructed using a contemporary version of heavy-timber construction - wood glulam beams with cross-laminated timber (CLT) floor panels will be supported on steel structural columns, providing a strong, durable, fire-resistant interior not unlike the warehouses built in turn-of-the-century Victoria that are still in use today.

The building will be designed to the requirements of the Step-Code and will utilize high standards of thermal performance, coupled with low power consumption equipment for space heating and cooling loads, water heating, and electrical fixtures throughout. Plumbing fixtures will all be low-flow consumption models.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is currently adequate. Infrastructure improvements will be completed as required by the City of Victoria.

Sincerely,

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Managing Principal



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