

February 27th, 2018

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

Attn.: Mayor & Council

Re: Rezoning and Development Permit Application
1044, 1048, 1052/54 Pendergast St. and 324/328 Cook St.
Lot 1, Plan 34863 & Lots 22, 23 & 24, Plan 28 of Fairfield Farm Estate, Victoria

We are pleased to submit this Rezoning and Development Permit application for 1052 Pendergast on behalf of Aragon Properties (the 'Applicant'). The rezoning and development permit are required in order to construct a four-storey multi-unit residential building. The details contained within this application have been carefully crafted to respect the neighbourhood context, the Official Community Plan and the draft updated Fairfield Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan.

The project design submitted has been shaped in part by a regular consultation process with the owners of neighbouring properties, the local Cook Street village community, and City of Victoria planning staff. The consultation and review process began prior to the start of design work and continued throughout the Schematic and Design Development stages and included the following formal meetings:

- ✓ Neighbourhood Meeting #1 – July 13th, 2017
- ✓ Neighbourhood Meeting #2 – September 7th, 2017
- ✓ Neighbourhood Meeting #3 – October 12th, 2017
- ✓ Neighbourhood Meeting #4 – October 26th, 2017
- ✓ Pre-CALUC Meeting – November 9th, 2017
- ✓ Community Meeting #5 – November 14th, 2017
- ✓ CALUC Meeting – December 7th, 2017
- ✓ Post Submission Meeting – Scheduled for March 1st, 2018



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A Corporate Partnership

Principals

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The design team presented at meetings #2 and #3 massing models for a 6 storey, 5 and 4 storey building scheme. This was a reflection on what the current OCP is allowing in regard to building height. Together the possible benefits and/or impacts on the neighbours were discussed.

As the building design development progressed refinements were made based on the feedback received at the meetings, including:

- Proceeding with a 4 storey building proposal to reduce the heights as per the Draft updated Neighbourhood Area Plan
- Pulling back from the neighbour building (380 Cook) to the north and move the proposed building closer to Pendergast St.
- Allowing for at grade access to the ground floor suites to the south and north.
- Incorporating at grade parking stalls for the commercial uses.
- Soften the Architecture with a natural material palette.
- Reducing the impact on shading and privacy for residents and neighbours.
- Improving views and increase natural light to the suites along the north property line.
- Include accessible, wide sidewalks and canopies.
- Replace the existing trees in a meaningful way and protect the Chestnut trees along Cook.

Existing Site Characteristics, Official Community Plan and Zoning:

The four parcels encompassed by the proposal are 2,875 sq.m. in total area and are currently occupied by 3 detached houses (none are registered or designated heritage) and a one-storey commercial building. While efforts have been made to relocate the structures, the tree canopy along Pendergast Street and Cook Street precludes moving the houses.

The site is relatively flat, falling only 0.5m from the north to the south (Pendergast). There are two protected trees on the subject property and the Consulting Arborist (Talbot Mackenzie & Associates) has surveyed all impacted trees and provided their assessments in a attached report submitted with this package.

The current zoning is R-K for the Pendergast sites and CR-3M for 324 Cook Street. The Cook Street site is within the designated Large Urban Village DPA 5 of the OCP and the 3 sites along Pendergast are designated Urban Residential and part of DPA16. The proposal thus conforms to the OCP objective for mixed use multi-unit residential infill development up to approximately six storeys in height.

The property is characterized by both its proximity to the Cook Street Village to the east and 4 storey multi-residential neighbouring buildings to the north and west. Across Pendergast is a 2 storey commercial building and a 4 storey multi-residential building. The Cook Street Village Activity Centre (CSVAC) is located at ground level in the neighbouring building at 380 Cook Street and is the gateway to the Cook Street Village coming from downtown Victoria. In fact, the immediate site context is comprised exclusively of commercial and multi-unit residential buildings. Pendergast St. is a local road but not part of the City's greenway network and does not host any transit service, whereas Cook Street is a secondary arterial road and does provide transit services and is also proposed to be part of the new bike path network.

The sites are subject to the OCP Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential buildings and the Draft Cook Street Village Design Guidelines. These documents reinforce the input of neighbours that a 4 Storey + Mezzanine, Multi-residential building is an appropriate level of development for this site. The proposal presented here is based on that starting point.

Description of Proposal

Massing & Siting:

The building design concept is based on addressing the requirements of the 2 separate DPA's where they apply on the site. As a result, the mixed-use commercial and residential uses and form are adjacent to the corner of Cook and Pendergast and solely residential uses are located along Pendergast.

In terms of massing, the building addresses the intent of the Draft Fairfield Gonzales Neighbourhood Plan and the Cook Street Design Guidelines, with a height of four storeys (plus a partial mezzanine), underground parking, and a blended FSR of 2.19:1. This was an important principle for the design team to maintain, based on the site analysis and understanding of the updated priorities developed by the neighbours.

Although massed on site as one building, the design is articulated and inflected along the public frontage on Pendergast to clearly separate the mixed-use portion that addresses the Village from the solely residential portion to the west. The main residential lobby entrance is located at this inflection point, past the commercial space and stepped well back from the sidewalk. The additional setback to the west is filled with landscaping and access patios and entry doors for ground-oriented residential units. The same concept has been applied along the north side.

A mezzanine floor is proposed at the north west corner of the building. 3 suites on level 4 will have individual mezzanine space and outdoor roof top patios facing south. The concept for this 5th floor space was developed in direct response to from neighbours at 380 Cook Street, as it allows an increase in the setback between the 2 buildings by shifting floor area from levels 1-4 to the mezzanine. This increase in setback improves the sense of separation and the access to sky views and sunlight in the shoulder seasons.

Streetscape / Relation to street:

The building design addresses the corner at Cook and Pendergast by an expressed curvilinear canopy above the commercial space and a rounded feature building corner to soften the edges and create an expressive form and character that is reflective of unique features of the site and the Cook Street Village. The building is responding to the DPA 5 design guidelines to be placed close to the property lines along the two streets. Yet the public realm will have wide, covered outdoor areas and generous sidewalks with human place-making elements such as public benches included in the landscape, creating plentiful space to walk, socialize or rest.

Along Pendergast Street, three ground floor units have individual garden gates, patios, and main entrances. The building lobby features an extended canopy and all-glass front wall to identify the primary building entrance. A large paneled perforated metal screen with a custom art motif is further enhancing the lobby space and clearly separates the DPA 5 from DPA 16 portions of the building. At this time, it is intended that the screen imagery will be developed in partnership with a local First Nations artist to culturally enhance the public space and building fabric, while also creating an attractive experience inside the building. Sunlight will cast a dappling effect of changing shadows on the lobby windows and then reverse the effect at night, with light from the building's interior animating the screen. These elements of the building form address the principles of the OCP Design Guidelines Section 2 that state "residential use at street level should have strong entry features and building designs that encourage interaction with the street" (2.4) and that "individual entrances with direct connections to the public sidewalk are encouraged." (2.5.1). The landscape design prepared by MDI Landscape Architects also includes continuous planter walls with trees growing to a scale appropriate to create visual interest at the public sidewalk without overwhelming the patio spaces.

The underground parkade access ramp is located at the west end of the site along Pendergast as directed by the CoV Engineering Department. It is screened with a vertical trellis structure to visually minimize the impact of the ramp and help muffle vehicle noise for the neighbours to the west.

The existing at-grade parking spaces at 380 Cook Street will be maintained and the access off Cook Street is guaranteed through an existing covenant. 8 new parking spaces will be added to the south of the same shared drive aisle and reserved for the commercial uses in the new building. These stalls are covered by the building and therefore are less visually prominent for the residential uses above and opposite.

Exterior Finishes

Architecturally, the 4 storey massing is expressed with horizontal lines of patios and balconies and features a softly rounded treatment at the featured south corner location that looks out over Cook Street Village. Layers of perforated metal privacy screens create a rhythm of vertical elements at the balconies and extend the architectural effect of the large screen over the lobby entrance. It is proposed that all privacy screens will be developed in collaboration with the same artist. It is hoped that this will create a contemporary connection between the current Village urban fabric and the ancient context and history of the site.

Materially, the design expresses a warm, natural, and elegant composition, using an exterior palette of high quality, durable and traditional finishes including wood, stone, stacked brick, pre-finished cementitious cladding and aluminum screen elements together with clear glass windows, and natural wood-texture soffits and siding. The brick is used at the east end and contrasted against the wood-tone finishes at the west to further reinforce the expression of two volumes and two uses on the site. The result is a building that expresses this site-specific response while also addressing the OCP guidelines for exterior finishes, which state that “exterior building materials should be high quality, durable and capable of weathering gracefully.” The guidelines continue, stating that “quality materials used on the principal façade should be continued around any building corner or edge which is visible from the public realm”, and in this case the brick and wood-tone cladding is used to good effect at all elevations, cladding the solid faces of the building. Introduction of the cementitious panels along the 4th floor creates a varied façade composition of warm-coloured materials that visually lowers the scale of the building and harmonizes with the proportions of the screen elements. The effect of the screen elements and their shadows will change with the time of day and seasons, giving variety and visual interest while maintaining privacy.

A special feature of the glazing elements are expansive folding glass walls, that will visually expand the space of the living rooms out to include the balconies when open. This pattern responds to the rhythm of the suites and residential spaces that line Pendergast and Cook, but also along the northern courtyard across 380 Cook.

Raised planters set on the parkade roof slab along the north and south edges will provide soil volume to grow fuller vegetation, which will use the privacy screens in part to support their growth. These measures are intended to address guideline 4.3 which states that “exposed party walls and blank side elevations, where necessary, should incorporate features such as texture, reveals, colours, plantings or other treatments to provide visual interest.”

As a further and final feature of visual interest, natural wood tone cladding of the balcony and roof soffits will create visual and tactile warmth for residents, and to “complement the palette of exterior materials used on the rest of the building.” (Guideline 4.4)

Transportation & Infrastructure

The project is well situated and fully serviced by City of Victoria infrastructure. Schools, parks and recreation facilities are all located within walking distance of the site. In addition, the nearby work and shopping opportunities available downtown and in the Cook Street village make this site suitable for an increased population density. This population will be well serviced with regard to transportation options, including immediate proximity to major transit routes on Cook Street and Fairfield Road as well as vehicle and bicycle parking and storage provisions.

The project will include at grade parking off Cook Street and underground parking accessed from the south side of the property along Pendergast to provide a total of 88 parking stalls for the 48 residential units and 5,400 sq.ft. of commercial space. Of this number 8 underground spaces are reserved for 1075 Pendergast under an existing legal agreement, leaving 80 for the new project requirements. A detailed parking study has been prepared for the project by the Watt Consulting Group, which highlights that the anticipated parking demand for the project will be 67 parking spaces – 13 less than the provision. This level of parking provision addresses another primary concern of the community – that sufficient parking be provided on site and not further burden an already congested parking environment at grade. Additionally, secure bicycle rooms well-located at grade and in the parkade will accommodate the required 51 Class-1 bike racks. 12 additional Class-2 racks are located at the Cook and Pendergast frontage and at the parking area accessed off Cook Street.

Project Benefits and Amenities

The project will bring 48 new residences to the Cook Street Village, in a form that is supportable relative to the goal of the draft Fairfield Community Plan to “encourage new housing design that fits in with the neighbourhood character.” The applicant has encouraged the design of a variety of unit sizes from 1 bedroom to 1 bedroom + den; 2 bedroom; 2 bedroom + den; as well as more generous 3 bedroom and 3 bedroom + den units in order to provide wider housing options in the project. The existing commercial area will be replaced with an almost equal amount of square feet of new space and the developer is looking for local businesses that will complement the existing commercial fabric of the village.

The building design will contribute to the quality of the public realm along Cook and Pendergast Street, by the quality of design, materials, and detailing. The design of ground-level entrance patios and their proximity to the boulevard will promote social interaction and improve the pedestrian experience by incorporation of the same quality materials that clad the building into the planter walls. The planters themselves will bring a colourful and pleasant landscape interface, replacing the old boulevard and lawns of the existing houses and commercial site.

Safety and security

The creation of a resident population is the primary factor in creating a safe pedestrian environment, through the placement of ‘eyes on the street’, and in this design all areas of the site are overlooked in good proximity by multiple dwelling units. Most importantly, the ground floor units facing Pendergast and the north have individual front doors and patios that address the street and courtyard, and re-inforce the sense of the street and boulevard as active and

shared space. Site lighting will illuminate the areas between buildings with ambient light to promote safety and visibility of landscaped areas. It is important to note also that this lighting will be shielded and kept at a lower mounting height in order to avoid glare and light pollution to neighbouring properties.

In preparing this rezoning and development permit application package the team has carefully considered community concerns, the relevant OCP objectives, and the DP Area Design Guidelines. The design is respectful of the neighbouring properties and proposes an elegant architecture that responds to the unique character of the community. We believe it will add to the strength and character of the Cook Street neighbourhood and we look forward to presenting the project to Council. 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.



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Principal



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