

822 Catherine Street
Letter to Mayor & Council

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Development Permit with Variance

ARYZE

01 September 2023

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 1P6

RE: Development Permit with Variance

Dear Mayor Alto, Council and Staff:

We are submitting the enclosed Development Permit Application for 822 Catherine St to deliver 27 much needed purpose-built rental homes for the Vic West neighborhood. This application builds on the work completed over the last two years to Rezone the land for a mixed-use development and further responds to feedback we heard from Staff, Council and the community with the original application.

On May 12, 2022 Council approved Rezoning Application no. 00782 and Development Permit Application with Variances no. 00173. That application was for 31 purpose-built rental homes and two commercial units which together add to the vitality, vibrancy and village-feel of the Catherine Street Small Urban Village.

Approved Variances Included:

1. Reduced front yard setback from 3.0m to 1.5m on first storey and 0 on upper storeys
2. Reduced rear yard setback from 6.0m to 2.3m
3. Increased height from 3 storeys to 3.5 storeys
4. Reduced residential vehicle parking from 30 stalls to 10 stalls
5. Reduced commercial vehicle parking from 6 stalls to 0 stalls

Since this application was approved, further work on tendering and constructability has been completed. The design has been updated based on City feedback and the variances requested to accommodate the updated design are within the variances previously approved.

Requested Variances Include:

1. Reduced front yard setback from 3.0m to 1.5m on first storey and 0 on upper storeys
2. Reduced rear yard setback from 6.0 m to 2.4m
3. Increased height from 3 storeys to 3.5 storeys

4. Reduced residential vehicle parking from 30 stalls to 10 stalls
5. Reduced commercial vehicle parking from 6 stalls to 0 stalls
6. Adherence to accessible/visitor stall dimensions from Schedule “C” prior to September 2022

The parkade design has not changed from the original proposal that was submitted under the Schedule “C” parking bylaw prior to September 2022. In September 2022 the schedule “C” bylaw was updated to increase visitor/accessible stall size to meet the definition of “van” parking. “Van” parking increases the stall width by 0.8m. The accessible/visitor still is provided as part of this proposal but does not meet the full widths to qualify as van accessible. We still believe this serves an important purpose and is functional for future users.

The design has adhered to the intent of the approved application in the following ways:

- **Setbacks**

The setbacks along Langford and Bella have remained the same as the approved application. Along the West property line, the setback above level 01 has been increased from 2.3m to 5.0m. This will reduce the impact of building massing, shadows, and overlook from within units into neighbouring homes.

- **Small Urban Village**

The commercial unit at the South East corner of the project has been intentionally located to extend the commercial frontage of the adjacent market and strengthen the small urban village.

- **Pedestrian Focus**

The frontage along Catherine Street continues to provide a gracious and friendly pedestrian focused space. The setback at the ground floor was increased to allow for a generous and covered entry providing planters, seating, stairs, and sloped [5%] surface leading to residential entry. Building tenants, spill out from CRU, and the general neighbourhood will activate this extension of the public realm at the ground floor of the project.

- **Patio**

The commercial space retains a patio along Bella Street which provides vitality for the village.

- **Massing**

The general building massing along Catherine, Bella, Langford streets adheres to the approved submission minus the removal of the previous top floor. However, the building design and units continue to face the three streets, providing visual activation and ‘eyes on the street’.

- **Windows**

Individual window size has been reduced while increasing the total number of windows and window area. As a result each unit has more glazing area to improve livability and visual

appeal. The design intent of strong window language on a unique pattern that highlights the massing as a volume is maintained through the new window strategy.

- **Amenity Area**

A rooftop amenity area has been provided of similar size to the one provided in the approved application. The rooftop amenity area will be open to all building residents and provide a very appealing space for outdoor gathering and use.

- **Landscape**

The number of new on-site trees [9] has remained the same as the approved application.

Project at a Glance

Height	North Setback	Number of Homes	Parking Stalls
3 Storey	3.1m	27 Homes	12 Stalls 100% EV Ready 1 Modo vehicle
Site Area	South Setback	Studio Bedroom	Short-Term Bike Stalls
10,795 sqft	3.9m	2 Homes 8%	11 Stalls
Floor Area	West Setback	One Bedroom	Long-Term Bike Stalls
19,485 sqft	2.4m	15 Homes 56%	40 Stalls 3 Cargo

FSR

1.8 FSR

East Setback

2.77m

Two Bedroom

5

Homes

18%

Residential Tenure

Rental

Site Coverage

72.8%

Three Bedrooms

5 Homes

18%

Commercial Space

1 CRU

Unique Features

- Rooftop deck amenity space
- Increased setbacks to allow space between the building and western property
- High performance & sustainable building strategies
- Built to meet & exceed BC Step Code 3 wherever possible
- 1 on-street Modo, close proximity to E&N and Galloping Goose bike transit corridors
- Tree retention on Catherine Street

Project Benefits

Street Oriented and Pedestrian Friendly

Thoughtfully-designed to emphasize the public realm and community connection

Diverse Housing in a Small Urban Village

27 centrally-located rental homes with just under half of the total units as 2 and 3-bedroom homes

Promoting a Car-Lite Lifestyle

Multi-modal transportation options, plus ample bike parking and Modo memberships for all residents

Neighbourhood-Serving Retail Space

A ground-floor local retail space, capturing the spirit and intent of the Small Urban Village

Secure, Purpose-Built Rental Homes

The strongest form of tenure and a beneficial alternative to homeownership

Closing

In summary, we have gathered feedback from the City and the community, which has been incorporated in this redesign to improve the development for both future residents and the neighbourhood at large. The communal space has been relocated to the roof away from neighbours and the setback from the western property line has increased. The building is now lower in height and less 'busy' architecturally. The building now responds to the neighbourhood context through more sensitive massing and enhancement of the urban "village heart" while meeting demand for rental units in the VicWest community. We believe that the proposed project better aligns with the community's vision, responds to housing need and will serve as a catalyst for positive growth in the area.

If you have any questions regarding the revisions please contact me directly at liv@aryze.ca.

Sincerely,



Liv McMahon

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Manager
Developments