

13 September 2021

**Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6**

Re: 956 Heywood Avenue / DPV 00126

Dear Mayor and Council,

Introduction

On behalf of Aryze Developments, we are pleased to resubmit for your consideration our revised proposal for 956 Heywood Avenue. The current zone for the subject site is R3-AM2 and the site is identified as Urban Residential within the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, consistent with the OCP, which supports higher density up to four storeys and 2:1 FSR. On smaller sites such as 956 Heywood, lower scale housing types like townhouses are encouraged.

Following the outcome of the Public Hearing held on January 28th, 2021, we have worked diligently with the project team to design a building that responds to the concerns we heard, consisting of building massing, loss of light, loss of view, and design. The project team has worked with the difficult site constraints to revitalize this under-utilized lot to reduce the massing, with consideration given to neighbours to ensure any negative impacts have been mitigated.

Description of Proposal

The current proposal is a five unit, townhouse proposal with two units fronting Heywood Avenue and three units in the rear, separated by an internal courtyard in order to reduce visual impact from the street, while allowing for an increased side-yard setback to the north. The three-bed and den units have been designed with families and downsizers in mind, ranging from 1340-1520 sq.ft. Exterior space has been prioritized and each unit will have an ample amount of patio space for their entryway, with additional exterior space off the living areas and on the rooftop. Privacy concerns were at the forefront of the exterior design and sufficient measures were taken, such as privacy screens and thoughtfully designed planters, to ensure our neighbours to the north and south would not be unnecessarily impacted.

The building design utilizes traditional materials in combination with a contemporary design approach, to achieve an honest, authentic architecture, true to it's time and place. The following reductions have been made with relation to the previous design:

	Previous Proposal	Current Proposal	Difference
Height (m)	14.8m	11.0	3.8m
Number of Storeys	4	3	1
Number of Units	6	5	1
Site Coverage	64%	59%	5%
Open Site Space	40 %	60.8%	20.8%
North Side-yard Setback	1.37m	1.75m	0.38m
South Side-yard Setback	1.37m	1.75m	0.38m
Building Wall Area West Elevation (Bldg A)	1,993 sqft	1,058 sqft	935 sqft (47% decrease)
Building Wall Area East Elevation (Bldg B)	2,100 sqft	1,559 sqft	541 sqft (26% decrease)
Building Wall Area South Elevation (Both Blocks)	4,185 sqft	2,952 sqft	1,233 sqft (29% decrease)

Consultation with Neighbours

After discussion with Staff following the result of the Public Hearing, we discussed the option of pivoting the design to four duplex units and going through the Board of Variance for approval. This design was presented to the Community on April 26th, 2021 and received positive feedback with the reduction in height and massing. Unfortunately, due to delayed review times, the ability in which this form of development would have been viable diminished. Thus, we felt a redesign to the current five unit townhouse form would better suit the needs of future residents and stakeholders alike.

A community consultation meeting was held on September 9th, 2021 and the revised proposal was presented to interested members of the community. The design was well-received and generally members seemed open to the five-unit townhouse design as an improvement to the original, 6-unit building iteration. Following comments back from Staff, another meeting will be held with the community. Feedback will be taken into consideration in conjunction with Staff comments prior to resubmission.

Transportation & Parking

956 Heywood is a parcel of land, conveniently located across from Fairfield's Beacon Hill Park. It is considered 'Very Walkable' and most errands can be accomplished on foot. It boasts proximity to Cook Street Village by way of a five minute walk and Dallas Road beach access in less than fifteen minutes. Furthermore, nearby BC Transit Routes such as #1, 3, 7, and 28 can all be found within one kilometre of the site giving future residents easy access to Victoria. Recently completed bike lanes on Vancouver Street and improvements to Cook Street create a Very Bikeable environment, enabling residents to complete most trips via bicycle should they choose to.

Finally, parking for the five-units will be in an at-grade, enclosed parking structure with access off of Heywood Avenue. The parkade will offer room for ten bicycle parking stalls, garbage and recycling receptacles, an electrical closet and six parking stalls which satisfies all zoning bylaw requirements.

Amenities

The proposed development will improve the current street-scape along Heywood Avenue through the provision of over fifteen trees along the north and south side-yards, within the internal courtyard and within the new, proposed boulevard. In addition to this, the exterior courtyard being provided will consist of built-in benches with down lighting features, additional plantings for the future residents to enjoy. Each unit will contain a 'flex' space that residents' can cater their needs to, be that additional storage, office space, a den, or more.

Sustainable Design

956 Heywood Avenue will be designed and built to meet BC Energy Step Code - Step 3 in accordance with the City of Victoria's phased Step Code guidelines, representing a 20% increase in energy efficiency. The building systems will be designed in a way to reach high levels of performance in Thermal Energy Demand Intensity (TEDI), Total Energy Use Intensity (TEUI) and airtightness. In addition to this, the central location of the subject site in relation to multiple local amenities encourages a pedestrian and bicycle oriented lifestyle.

Conclusion

We would like to thank you for reconsidering this proposed application. The leftover site located at 956 Heywood Avenue is long overdue for revitalization. This proposal not only responds well to the concerns we heard from our Neighbours and at Public Hearing, but fits within the neighbourhood context, aligning well with the objectives described in the Fairfield Neighborhood Plan and OCP. We are excited to bring forward this innovative, five-unit townhouse development and further support the needs of those looking for alternative forms of housing.

Thank you for your time,

Luke Mari

Principal, Development
Aryze Developments
1839 Fairfield Road

ARYZE

Aryze Developments
1839 Fairfield Road
Victoria, BC V8S 1G9
P: (250) 940-3568
W: aryze.ca

Victoria, BC