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DPV 00051 - 937 View Street - TRC Comments

Dear Charlotte ;

Thank you for the TRC comments issued August 29th, 2017. We have reviewed the comments and have made revisions to the application in key areas to respond. This letter summarizes point-by-point our responses and a list of drawing revisions is provided at the end.

It has taken longer than usual to respond to the comments because the Owner has worked diligently over the past few months meeting with contractors that have experience and expertise in modular construction in order to prove the constructibility of the design concept developed thus far. As part of that process and in order to better align the development unit mix with anticipated rental market conditions, we have adjusted the design for levels five through ten to reduce the number of 2-bedroom suites. This has resulted in an increase in unit count and has yielded changes to the building elevations that help to address comments from your original review related to the building form and character.

The following information provides a point-by-point summary of responses to the original comments :

Development Services Division
Use and Density

1. *R-48 zone requires that applicants prove out the potential density on-site…*

Refer to the Base FSR calculation model attached. We have set the base FSR for this site using a nine storey (27m high) design with street wall setback at 3.5m up to 15m height, 4.5m secondary street wall setback up to 24m height, and 6.0m setback above 25m (following required zoning setbacks and guidelines for narrow streets). The model also allows for ramp access at the south boundary of the site to parking, zero setback from internal boundaries on Level 2, and 3m setback from internal boundaries on the upper levels. The base FSR for the site with this model is 5.99 to 1 (9,423 m2 GFA).

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The balance of the Use and Density comments relate to the application only if it were proposing an increase in Density, which it does not. Our Base Density is the Zone Density as calculated (5.99 to 1) and our proposed development density is less (5.65 to 1). In this circumstance no 'land lift' analysis is required.

Massing, Form and Character

1. *DCAP policy 6.175 speaks to providing step backs on buildings to avoid the visual presence of a bulky upper building mass. Please employ step backs at the upper storeys to better meet this guideline.*

While DCAP policy 6.175 encourages the stepping of upper building form to "minimize the effects of shading and wind vortices, to maintain views to the open sky, and to avoid the visual presence of bulky upper building mass.", we have chosen, instead, to vary the form of the individual elevations and to vary the location and size of significant openings through the walls of the building in a way that expresses and maximizes the efficiency of the modular stacking units that will form the core structure for this project. We also made the decision to not step the exterior wall planes of the building in order to maximize the effects referred to in policy 6.175 for the *interior* atrium space of the building and, for these reasons, we feel that step backs are not warranted.

2. *DCAP policy 6.176 encourages varied heights and massing to avoid uniformity in building design. While the building presents an attractive and varied composition, it may benefit from varying the massing as well.*

One of the strengths and features of the proposed modular construction methodology is that we can present a varied composition of forms without reducing the efficiency of the structural design. On the upper level facing View street we have created a large open amenity area with a trellis structure for plants and shade. This creates a stepped upper level form across the primary street frontage that, in conjunction with the large vertical slot on the south elevation and the variations in plan for each of the elevations, creates a non-uniform building design.

3. *Staff have concerns with the building separation distances. Although a minimum 3m distance is required in DCAP, the guidelines encourage greater distances to enhance the livability if units. Please consider increases to building separation distances.*

The DCAP establishes the 3m minimum distance from property line for livability. This establishes that the worst case condition would be two buildings with a 6m separation between them. This is essentially a 'laneway' condition and not

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unusual to find as urban areas intensify their development. In our case, we have two frontages that are well back from the minimum 3m (west) or facing a public street (north) and two frontages that are facing adjacent properties (south and east). To the south, the larger lot is subject to a rezoning application for a 12 storey residential tower and we have looked closely at the relationship between the proposed building and our design (ref: A102). In this case the closest building separation distance is 8.77 m. To the east, the existing narrow lot is not a stand-alone development site and is most likely a candidate for incorporation into the corner property at View and Vancouver. In that scenario we would anticipate setbacks along the east boundary in excess of the 3m minimum, similar to the relationship at the south boundary. In addition, the increased setbacks would have a negative impact on the interior common atrium space which is intended to be a major asset and focus for the livability of these units. We believe that the 3m livability setback is, in this case, sufficient for ensuring adequate separation and privacy between adjacent buildings is maintained.

4. *Please ensure that all portions of the building, excluding parapets, cornices, guardrails, and other architectural elements are contained within a 1:5 building setback ratio established at 15 metres above grade from the property line parallel to the street.*

The 1:5 setback ratio line is indicated on drawing A 302. The building form, as described earlier, does not step back on the upper levels to maintain the consistency and integrity of the modular structure and to preserve the best access to light and views from within the interior atrium space. This results in the upper levels of the building, beginning at level 9, projecting into the theoretical setback plane established by the 1:5 setback ratio. At the floor level of L14, the top floor, the face of the building projects into the 1:5 setback line a total of 2.2m. We feel that this non-compliance with a setback ratio is reasonable given the type of building construction and the overall height of the building being proposed.

Podium and Streetscape

1. *Ensure all residential accesses are elevated in relation to the adjacent sidewalk. while this appears to be the case, some renderings seem to indicate a step up at the residential entrances only to then step down at the door.*

All of the ground-oriented residential units are raised above the sidewalk and street elevation in consideration of good and proper CPTED practices. Please refer to floor plan A201. Grades are indicated on this plan and clearly show that the residential entrances and floor plates are raised above the sidewalk / street level. The residential units are level with the interior corridor adjoining the suites

and raised above the level of the main entrance lobby. On the east side the bike access walkway slopes up to meet the same elevation as the residential units.

2. *The commercial portion of the podium elevation is well defined from the body of the building, however, it presents as stark an(d) (sic) unvaried, compared to the remainder of the building. Please consider a more complementary approach to the glazing, the partitions, the canopy, or all three elements.*

The commercial storefront glazing and canopy have been re-worked to present a more cohesive and complementary design in keeping with the overall design for the building. Separate retail entrances have been defined with portal frames, the glazing above the canopy level has been treated with the same linear screen material used elsewhere on the building and the laneway trellis, and the canopy depth has been reduced to eliminate any encumbrance on City property.

3. *Staff are concerned about the width and architectural expression of the entrance vestibule. Please consider increasing the width of this element, at least within the first two storeys, and providing something of visual interest on the internal faces.*

The entrance vestibule is a key feature of the design - it is a significant element that promotes access, a transitional entrance space, and is a strong visual connection between the building's interior atrium and the street. It is narrow and tall and this is intentional - it provides a direct spatial reference for all who enter or pass-by the building to the fundamental module dimension the is key to the design and construction of the project. The owners are committed to installing a hanging structure / light fixture / art work within this feature space but an appropriate element has not yet been identified.

4. *Please consider providing a residential amenity room next to the entrance vestibule on the residential side of the ground floor, with windows that face the inside of the vestibule.*

During the design development process a number of locations for an amenity space were discussed and examined. In the submitted design the primary amenity space is located on level 14 - it is an outdoor living space with outdoor kitchen facilities. There is also a secondary space located at the base level of the vertical slot in the south elevation - level 11 - and informal gathering and seating space located at at level 3 at the base of the interior atrium. With these amenity areas provided we feel an amenity space adjacent to the vestibule entrance is not warranted.

dHKa

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5. *DCAP speaks to providing a defined podium level, however, the residential portion of the building is expressed as identical to the remainder of the building. While this appears work well, please consider as architectural element to link the commercial cornice line to the residential section of the ground floor.*

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The building design and massing expresses the commercial area, residential entry vestibule, and residential units extending to the ground floor level in different manners in order to create a clear hierarchy between these different uses and their methods of construction. The residential units are part of the modular design methodology and it is important that the stacked modules are able to be inter-connected without the introduction of intervening floor slabs. It makes sense for the residential units to 'stack' uninterrupted from top to bottom, without a capping element or cornice line to separate them. The commercial space is not part of the modular system - it is, like the entrance vestibule, an area that expresses the void or absence of the stacking modules - for these two elements the presence of a 'cap' or perimeter framing element is important to delineate the boundary between the modular system above and the 'void' spaces below. For these reasons we have looked at introducing a cornice or 'cap' element at the lower residential units but have decided that it is not an appropriate response for this particular design methodology.

Site Plan

1. *The Downtown Core Area Plan (Map 16, policies 5.32 and 5.38) and the OCP (Policy 6.12) include objectives related to the provision of a mid-block walkway at this location. With the anticipated urban plaza likely to occur just north of this development, it is important for the City to realize these walkways. Please consider the inclusion of a mid-block walkway.*

As a long-term business tenant on the same block of Fort Street and a frequent user of the existing informal walkway connection from Fort street through to View Street, the importance of the mid-block walkway connection is well understood. Our proposal includes for a significant access laneway (existing easement) complete with landscape design and lighting features to elevate it above the standard 'back lane' design and make it a desirable feature for residents, neighbours, and the public to access. We *have* made allowances for the mid-bock walkway connection as part of honouring the easement and access agreements attached to Title on this property. The continuity of this mid-block connection is dependent upon off-site conditions on adjacent properties that are outside our control.

2. *Policy 6.8 in the OCP encourages the logical assembly of development sites that enable the best realization of permitted development potential for the*

area. Please provide commentary on the applicant's attempts toward land assembly with 941 View.

The logical assembly of development sites that would enable the best realization of permitted development potential for the property at 941 View Street would be to consolidate that site with the corner site to the east (View and Vancouver), creating a rectangular site similar in size to the 937 View site and increasing the available density on a site that will face significant challenges to development due to the sub-soil conditions in this area. There is no net benefit to overall development potential in consolidating 941 View Street with 937 View Street.

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Materials

1. *The guidelines call for high quality and durable materials.*

The proposed materials are of high quality and high durability for long-term ease of maintenance and good appearance. The modules will be clad with phenolic panels (Trespa) with slight variation in colour and reflectivity to create the patterned elevations. Feature walls in the entrance and sunlight slots will be clad with panel material with contrasting colour and texture. We will provide a material sample board and a night scene rendering of as requested ; both are being prepared and will be submitted separately.

2. *The building expresses a form of gradient with the arrangement of black and white modules, looking at the north elevation, from dark to light as you move East to West. Consider rearranging this gradient from dark to light starting at the bottom with dark and moving toward a light top to comply with Appendix 7 item 33.*

We have examined the gradient of light and dark for each of the elevations, and the north elevation in particular, and feel that the gradation form dark to light that is described in the guidelines does not anticipate a design that provides significant gradation and interlacing of forms across the elevations in the manner that has been submitted. The policies refer more to a traditional approach of 'base-column-capital' and 'dark base-lightened top' as a method of making the top levels of taller buildings visually recede and be less pronounced. Our design uses the variation and modulation of form and colour at the scale of the unit modules to produce a 'wrap' around the building elevations that is varied and interwoven horizontally and vertically. There is no singular point or plane of interest or dominance and no clear definition of 'base-middle-top'. We believe the design of the elevations is already varied and visually interesting and does not require modification as described. Revisions to the unit mix have resulted in a variation in the presentation of the modules on levels 5 through 10 that make the

building corners more regular and provide a contrasting massing to the more open and rotated corners not he lower and upper floors. This provides a subtle variation that better defines a ‘base - middle - top’ typology.

We note that it is your intention to refer to the project to the Advisory Design Panel and look forward to that review at your earliest convenience.

We also note that the Plan Check document included with the review comments contains an error. The Side (West) setback is incorrectly noted at 0.00 m where it is actually 6.1m at the point of closest building face (the existing easement in included in our property boundary).

Finally, we will revise and revise the drawings and documentation as the project evolves to accommodate the comments from Engineering and Public Works, Parks, Permits, and the Fire Department. We will work with these departments to address their comments prior to the application being presented to Committee of the Whole. One item, however, requires additional comment at this time :

Underground Utilities Review

1. *A change in zoning may allow for changes in permitted use and density resulting in increased sewage flow rates.*

As noted previously, this application is not proposing an increase in density or change in permitted use and no increase in sewage flow rates is expected nor required to be studied for this application.

Thank you for your efforts to date and going forward to see this application through. Please call me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely Yours,
de Hoog & Kierulf architects

Charles Kierulf architect AIBC MRAIC
Principal

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Summary of Revisions to Drawings - DPR1 (dated 09FEB18)

A001	Drawing List Updated
A002	No Changes
A100	No Changes
A101	Sight lines at driveway access highlighted
A102	No Changes
A201	Canopy line indicated at property line
A202	No Changes
A203	No Changes
A204	Corner units changed to 1BR from 2BR
A205	Corner units changed to 1BR from 2BR
A206	Corner units changed to 1BR from 2BR
A207	No Changes
A208	No Changes
A209	No Changes
A210	Roof Plan added
A211	Unit Plans (formerly A210)
A301	Adjacent building profile information added
A302	No Changes
A401	Elevations revised to match plan changes / colour mix of modules / storefront and adjacent building profile information added
A402	Elevations revised to match plan changes / colour mix of modules / storefront and adjacent building profile information added
A500	Views updated with current 3D model design
A501	Context information updated / added and shadow studies recast
A502	Views updated with current 3D model design.

No changes to Landscape Drawings.

End of Revision list.