

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square

January 2, 2020

**RE: 956 HEYWOOD AVENUE, VICTORIA BC V8V 2Y4
REZ NO. 00689 & DP NO. 000547**

The following is our response to the City of Victoria's recent concerns with our proposed development at 956 Heywood Avenue. Our design team has taken great care to address the issues brought forth by the city and have addressed them as outlined below.

Development Services Division Comments

1. Please consider registration of a Housing Agreement to ensure a future strata cannot restrict the rental of units. If offered, staff would recommend Council make execution of the Agreement a condition of setting the date for an Opportunity for Public Comment on the Development Permit with Variance Application.

The Applicant (Aryze Developemts) will register a housing agreement to ensure a future strata cannot restrict the rental of units.

2. The changes to the front façade have improved the building's relationship; however, please consider the following for consistency with the Design Guidelines:

- *screening the vehicle with a parking gate*
 - *reducing the hard surfacing in front of the building and increasing the planting area*
 - *more prominent front entry features*
 - *confirm if the balcony screens could fully enclose and, if so, consider reducing the amount of screening to ensure the building maintains a lighter less bulky appearance.*
- a. **A screened gate has been added at the entry to the parking area that will have the same appearance as the operable screens above at the residential levels. (Refer to A0.0, A0.2, A0.3, A2.1, A6.5, and A7.1)**
 - b. **In order to reduce hard surfaces, one of the concrete benches has been removed. A 5'-1 1/2" wide permeable path centered in the driveway aisle has been added and the concrete path that was located across the front of the lobby has been replaced with plantings. (Refer A0.0, A0.2, A0.3, A2.1, A6.3, A6.4, and L2)**
 - c. **The front door will be large 4' wide by 8'-10" tall and be sculptural, artistic, and a clearly defined access point. In addition, there will only be one 5' wide path to the entry from the sidewalk that will be lushly landscaped on both sides, creating a natural and inviting procession to the front entry. The lobby will have a large floor to ceiling window facing the street, making the building's presence clear and easy to understand. (Refer A0.0, A0.3)**

- d. In order to ensure a light and open feeling, the sliding screens will only enclose 50% of each balcony's perimeter. (Refer A6.2, A6.5, A7.1, A7.2, and A7.3)

3. Please provide a material board and confirm materials and colours listed as TBD on the elevation drawings.

A material board will follow in time for the ADP committee meeting. The material tags on the A7/Elevation drawings have been updated and TBD descriptors clarified/removed. (Refer to A7.1, A7.2, and A7.3)

4. The window overlay indicates there would be direct sightlines between the proposed units on levels 2 and 3 and the adjacent buildings to the north and south. Please consider design revisions to limit privacy issues.

As illustrated in the window overlay, there are many windows on the neighbours to the north and south, making it next very difficult to completely avoid sightlines to neighbours. The proposed side windows are not only an important source of light and air to the center of our development, but provide an important point of relief in the façade as viewed from the outside.

As such, consideration was put into the windows that do face the neighbours. They are only kitchen windows, not main living windows. Therefore, they will not be a primary outlook. They are recessed in 3'-0" from the exterior of the wall, with garden beds in front so that there will be plant screenings front of the proposed windows. We are also proposing slat screens in front of the side yard widows, which will activate the side yard and limit direct sightlines between neighbours. On similar infill projects, we have repeatedly heard from neighbours that they look favourably on having some windows breaking up side elevations. It is important to design the side yards to make the elevations more active and lively. The proposal is better than the alternative – a boring, dreary wall facing adjacent neighbours.

5. Consider enclosing the parking area on the south side to reduce impacts on the adjacent residents.

A screen has been added to the side yard at the opening to the parking area. To build on the notes above, the outlook for neighbours at this level will also have some visual interest, rather than being just a blank wall. The slat screen, in addition to the side yard landscape plan, will create a pleasant and textured border between the two buildings.

The slats and semi-open south wall will also allow some natural light and fresh air into the parking area, potentially reducing some energy use and providing a more pleasant environment for future residents of our proposal. (Refer to A2.1, A6.1, and A7.2)

6. What are the plans for the existing building? It is worth considering if it can be moved within the neighbourhood.

Unfortunately, the house is not a candidate to be moved due to its age and poor condition.

7. For any renovation or redevelopment that requires relocation of existing tenants, the property owner should develop a Tennant Assistance Plan.

The house is currently empty because it is unsuitable for rent.

Engineering and Public Works Department

8. As a condition of building permit approval, the applicant will be financially responsible for full frontage works along the Heywood Avenue frontage to current City of Victoria standards and to the satisfaction of the Director of Engineering. This includes the driveway crossing, curb, gutter and sidewalk reconstruction, pavement restoration to centreline of Heywood Avenue as required, drainage works, underground utility servicing and boulevard improvements as required. Protection of the root systems/tree canopy of existing boulevard trees must be taken into account during construction and restoration.

The Applicant will be financially responsible for full frontage works along Heywood Avenue built to current City of Victoria standards, and to the satisfaction of the Director of Engineering.

9. As part of the submission requirements for the building permit, a detailed civil drawing prepared by a professional civil engineer shall be submitted for approval, detailing the scope of work, including a site plan and profile. Fees for service connections and deposits for the off-site works shall be paid prior to building permit issuance. The applicant may be required to enter into a Construction Agreement with the City, which will be determined at the building permit stage.

A detailed civil drawing will be prepared by a professional civil engineer and be submitted for approval, detailing the scope of work including a site plan and profile. Fees for service connections and deposits for the off-site works will be paid prior to building permit issuance.

10. With regards to third party utilities, such as BC Hydro, it is the applicant's responsibility to determine infrastructure requirements associated with the proposed works. It is recommended that the applicant contact BC Hydro and other relevant utility companies (phone, cable, internet, gas) well in advance of submitting civil drawings to determine if there will be any underground third party servicing, how connections will be made and servicing locations, in order to expedite the site servicing plan review and building permit approval process. The locations of these services, including any new overhead lines, must not disturb or adversely affect existing or proposed trees, tree canopy, or tree roots. Utility permit approval will not be given by City staff until the detailed site servicing plan at building permit stage has been signed off and approved by the utility company and City staff.

The Applicant will determine infrastructure requirements associated with the proposed works and ensure that all third party utilities will be coordinated well in advance of the civil drawing submission.

Transportation Review

11. Please describe how the garbage, recycling, and compost will be collected from the building. Bins are not permitted to be placed on the public (City) right of way for any period of time. The applicant may want to work with these service providers for an appropriate solution for pickup.

The future strata will contract a private service provider.

12. The September 10, 2019 Zoning Plan Check indicates that a 3 stall parking variance is required. To help mitigate the anticipated parking shortfall for this property, firm TDM (Transportation Demand Management) commitments justifying the requested parking variance are required. TDM programs may include enhanced bicycle parking beyond minimum requirements, the purchase of Modo car share memberships, or the purchase of bus passes through BC Transit's EcoPass program. Please contact Steve Hutchison to discuss. An updated letter with firm and detailed TDM commitments is required.

The proposed project will have eight spaces for long-term bicycle storage, two more than required by the current zoning. The Applicant will also provide lifetime Modo memberships tied to the strata units.

13. It is strongly recommended that a window between the bicycle room and the lobby be installed to improve passive surveillance of the long-term bicycle parking area.

A window has been added between the lobby and long-term bicycle storage. (Refer to page A2.1)

Underground Utilities Review

14. Site servicing to the property is required to comply with the City's current bylaws and BC Plumbing Code. At building permit submission, a detailed site servicing plan indicating existing and proposed storm drain, sanitary sewer and water service locations to the property, shown from the City main lines to the property line, will be required for review by staff. The plan must be fully dimensioned and plotted at 1:100 or 1:200 metric scale. Proposed services must not disturb or adversely affect existing or proposed trees, so please consider any impacts to trees when determining the locations. Please note:

- *Storm Drain and Sanitary Sewer:* The existing storm drain and sanitary sewer connections to the property will need to pass a "test for re-use" and must be adequately sized. New services must be installed if the existing pipes fail this test. All new services, adequately sized as per City standards, as well as any associated infrastructure upgrades in the City right of way, shall be completed by City crews, and must be purchased at the expense of the applicant. Service connection fees will be charged to the applicant as per the fee schedule in the Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Utilities Bylaw No. 14-071 (and any amendments to the Bylaw). All abandoned storm drain and sanitary sewer services are to be capped on private property by the applicant's contractor.
- *Water Service:* In order to determine if the requirements for the water service is necessary, the applicant's engineer is required to calculate the hydraulic loads and determine the size of the proposed water service. Water service connections in the City right of way, as well as the capping of abandoned connections, shall be completed by City crews, and must be purchased at the expense of the applicant. Service connection fees will be charged to the applicant as per the fee schedule in the Waterworks Bylaw No. 07-030 (and any amendments to the Bylaw, specifically Bylaw Amendment No. 16-079). Note that the water service connection will not be permitted under the proposed driveway, therefore an alternate location for the water service is required. It may be located directly adjacent to the driveway and under the driveway flare to have the least impact on existing or proposed trees.

D'Arcy Jones Architects will add existing and proposed storm, sanitary, and water connection locations to the site plan for building permit application. DJA will ensure that

proposed locations will not disturb or adversely affect any trees. The Applicant will ensure that civil engineering work will conform to city bylaws and follow all necessary procedures.

15. When determining the above service connection locations, please ensure that required offsets from the proposed boulevard/private property trees and third party utilities are met.

For the building permit application, the site plan will show service connections that conform with required offsets from the proposed boulevard/private property trees and third party utilities.

16. Prior to commencement of excavation or soil relocation, contractors must be registered under Bylaw 14-0714, Schedule G: Code of Practice for Construction and Development Activities.

The Applicant will comply prior to excavation.

17. For information on existing underground servicing and sizing, please contact Rich Allen.

The Applicant will contact Rich Allen prior to excavation.

Stormwater Management Review

17. The City encourages Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) and offers financial incentives for properties to manage rainwater on-site. We support and encourage the use of permeable surfaces for the parking stalls and other hard surfaces, rain gardens, green roofs and the preservation of as much green/open space as possible. Please consider integrating GSI in the development. The property owner may be eligible for financial incentives if the designs (such as for the proposed green roof) meet requirements as per the City's Rainwater Management Standards.

The current proposed roof plan has a large green roof (1,388.1 SF), as detailed in the landscaping plan (L6). A large section of grade will also be permeable (1,886.6 SF). In total, 54% of the site plan will be permeable (3,224.7 SF). The details for the green roof will be included in the building permit application.

18. Please show locations of all proposed on-site drains and their connection to the City storm drain main on the drawings.

For the building permit submission, the site plan will include all proposed on-site drains and their connection to the City storm drain.

19. If GSI integrated into the design, in order for staff to calculate the rainwater credits, please indicate on the building permit plan submission, in square meters, the:

- *site impervious areas*
- *permeable surface areas*

For the building permit submission, the site plan will include an analysis outlining the areas of impervious and permeable surface areas.

Permits and Inspections Division

20. The residential suites open directly onto an exit. Please see 3.3. of the BCBC as this is not permitted in buildings over 3 stories in building height.

Via the code consultant retained for this project, BCBC 2018 Sentence 3.3.4.4.(5) specifically permits a dwelling unit to open directly into an exit stair, provided the dwelling units have a second, separate means of egress and the building is not more than three storeys. In this case, each of the two dwelling units open onto stairs however, the building is four storeys. The three storey limit relates to the potential for an enclosed stair to draw smoke upward via stack or chimney effect, due to differences in pressure between indoor and outdoor air. There is no potential for this effect in an exterior stair, as there is no pressure differential where the stair is open to the outdoors. (Refer to the attached report submitted by GHL Consultants.)

21. Generic Note: Designer to ensure the spatial separations and unprotected openings meet the requirement of the current BCBC.

Spatial separation calculations are included in the drawing set on the A7 pages. Diagrams have been added to further illustrate allowable unprotected openings. (Refer to page A7.5)

22. Does the stair exit lead to the street without crossing a property line and/or does the exiting pass by any unprotected openings within 3m of the walkway to the public thoroughfare? This will be critical to the building permit plan review. Architect notes an alternate solution will be provided.

GHL Consultants will provide an alternative solution for the building permit submission. Because the exit path does follow the north exterior wall (directly below second floor openings), water curtain sprinklers will be provided at these openings.

Zoning Plan Check

23. Provide the floor area as per Schedule A's definition. Confirm what areas have been excluded. Include the stair well to the roof and the first storey.

The zoning analysis and area calculations have been updated. The area calculations also note which areas have been excluded. (Refer to page A0.2 and A0.4)

24. Confirm if there is a proposed storage space on the first storey underneath the stairs. The floor plans and landscape plan are inconsistent. If proposed, include the floor area.

The storage under the stairs on the first storey has been removed. Architectural and landscape plans are updated to reflect this.

25. Provide the floor area of each unit measured from the interior of walls, not to the center of demising walls.

The areas for each unit have been updated to measure the areas to the interiors of walls. (Refer to page A0.4)

26. The roof level is subject to floor area, height, and number of storeys.

The 'roof' at the top of stairs to the roof deck has been removed. Access to the roof will be via a skylight hatch. Removing the roof will maintain the proposal as a four-storey building. The storage room on the roof deck will be a 4'-0" crawl space, not counted towards building floor area. (Refer to page A2.5, A6.1, A6.3, A6.4, A6.5, A7.2, and A7.3)

27. Dimension the opening of each parking space. Ensure that 2.6m is provided.

A dimension string has been added to each parking space to ensure that 2.6m is provided. (Refer to page A2.1)

28. Dimension the short-term bicycle parking spaces.

Dimensions have been added to the short-term bicycle parking spaces. (Refer to page A2.1)

29. Dimension the separation space between the long-term bicycle parking spaces. Ensure that all the long-term bicycle parking spaces are consistent with Schedule C.

Dimensions have been added to the long-term bicycle parking spaces to ensure that all the long-term bicycle parking spaces are consistent with Schedule C. (Refer to page A2.1)

30. Ensure the landscape plan and architectural plans are consistent.

Landscape and architectural plans are consistent.