

Appendix A

Staff report to CHC, April 4 2018

REPORT

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

To: Community Heritage Commission Date: April 4, 2018

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Subject: 514 Carnarvon Street (Holy Trinity Cathedral): Heritage Revitalization
Agreement Application

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment, a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) and a Special Development Permit (SDP) application have been received for Holy Trinity Cathedral located at 514 Carnarvon Street.

The application would allow development of a 30 storey residential tower adjacent to the Holy Trinity Cathedral, with space for a new Parish Hall, and underground parking. The current Parish Hall would be demolished. In exchange, the applicant would conduct interior renovations, a seismic upgrade and restoration of the exterior of the Cathedral, and provide long-term legal protection to the Cathedral through a Heritage Designation Bylaw. The proposal also provides new space for a publically accessible plaza, and an elevator which would provide secured, accessible, public, pedestrian access between Carnarvon and Clarkson Streets, and a connection to the Columbia Street SkyTrain station.

POLICY AND REGULATIONS

Official Community Plan (OCP) Land Use Designation

The existing OCP designation for this site is Residential – Mid Rise Apartment which permits mid-rise apartments, low rise apartments, townhouses, stacked townhouses, row houses, community amenities (such as churches, child care, community space) and small-scale retail and service uses (such as restaurants or stores). The intent of this designation is to permit buildings up to 12 storeys.

The subject site is in the Albert Crescent Precinct of the Downtown Plan. The intent of this Precinct is to encourage the development of more ground-oriented housing and housing suitable for families, to preserve the existing market rental housing stock, and to respect, enhance and celebrate the recognized heritage resources such as Irving House and the four historic churches in the area.

Given that the applicant is proposing a high-rise on the site, the proposal is not consistent with the current OCP Land Use Designation. The City is considering a change in Land Use Designation as the proposal supports the City's heritage and housing policy goals.

Zoning Bylaw

The existing zoning for the subject property is Public and Institutional District (P-1). The intent of this zone is to allow institutional uses at a low density (FSR of 0.6). The proposed mixed use development does not comply with this zone. A Heritage Revitalization Agreement is being considered to support this mixed used development, in exchange for the conservation and seismic upgrade of Holy Trinity Cathedral.

Heritage Revitalization Agreement

There is recognition in the community that there should be a variety of heritage incentive tools that assist and encourage property owners to conserve their heritage buildings, and that the most appropriate legislative tool to achieve this is the Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA). In exchange for long-term legal protection and exterior restoration, certain zoning relaxations, including an increase in density, are considered appropriate incentives that offer property owners a financially viable means for conservation. Provisions for the local government to negotiate a Heritage Revitalization Agreement are set out in Section 610 of the *Local Government Act*.

Heritage Designation

A heritage property which is the subject of an HRA is also protected with a Heritage Designation Bylaw. A Heritage Designation Bylaw is a form of land use regulation that places long-term protection on the land title of a property and which is the primary form of regulation that can prohibit demolition. Any changes to a protected heritage property must first receive approval from City Council (or its delegate) through a Heritage Alteration Permit. Provisions for the local government to place Heritage Designation Bylaws on properties are set out in Sections 611, 612 and 613 of the *Local Government Act*.

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

Council adopted the “Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada” (“Standards & Guidelines”) in 2008 as a basis for assessing heritage projects within the city. All HRA proposals are carefully evaluated by staff using the “Standards & Guidelines” to determine the level of compliance.

Staff have conducted a review of the revised Heritage Conservation Plan for the proposed conservation of the exterior and interior of the Cathedral and have identified that it meets some of the heritage principles outlined in the “Standards & Guidelines”. A discussion of this review is detailed later in the report.

BACKGROUND

Site Characteristics and Context

The subject property is located within the Albert Crescent Precinct of the Downtown neighbourhood, in an area consisting of a mix of multi-family residential, single-family residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The site is bordered to the north by Carnarvon Street and to the south by Clarkson Street and is within half a block of both Sixth Street and Columbia Street. There is a publicly used private passageway through the property from Carnarvon to Clarkson Street, which pedestrians often travel to reach the Columbia Street SkyTrain station. A site context map is provided in Appendix 1.

There are currently two buildings on site: Saint George’s Hall (western building) and the Holy Trinity Cathedral (eastern building). At the Carnarvon Street frontage, the Holy Trinity Cathedral building is lower than the street level and is very close to the front property line. Saint George’s Hall is at grade on Carnarvon Street. However, the overall lot is heavily sloped with a substantial grade difference between Carnarvon and Clarkson Street. Both the Cathedral and Hall are uphill from Clarkson Street.

The total floor space of Saint George’s Hall is 1,016 sqm (10,934 sqft) and the total floor space of the Holy Trinity Cathedral is 512 sqm (5,516 sqft). The Floor Space Ratio (FSR) for the site is 0.492, which is less than the Zoning Bylaw entitlement for the site.

Figure A: Existing Site Statistics

Lot Frontage	70.49 m	(231.79 sq.ft.)
Lot Depth	40.23 m	(131.99 ft)
Lot Area	3,107 sq.m.	(33,428 sq.ft.)
Existing Gross Floor Area (Institutional)	1,528 sq.m.	(16,450 sq.ft.)
Existing Site Coverage	32.48%	

Heritage Value of the Cathedral

Holy Trinity Cathedral is listed on the City of New Westminster's Heritage Register. This does not provide legal protection however; it means that the property has been recognized by the City as having heritage value to the community. The Cathedral is valued for its age and association with the pioneer days of New Westminster and for its connection to the Royal Engineers and their design of the city. The Cathedral, as a building, is an important heritage asset in the Downtown and in the city, and the congregation and the institution have played a significant role in the community life of New Westminster since the 1850s.

Holy Trinity Cathedral was established as a Parish in 1859 and its site chosen by Colonel Richard C. Moody. The intention of the Royal Engineers was to locate this church on this site as a prominent central feature to demonstrate loyalty to England's primary faith. The Cathedral has been used continuously on this site since 1859. The Cathedral was originally constructed in wood in 1860, destroyed by fire in 1865, rebuilt in sandstone in 1862, only to be nearly destroyed in the Great Fire of 1898. The current structure was built immediately after the Fire between 1899 and 1902 using the surviving exterior stone walls. To cover the scorch marks of the fire, the walls were covered with cement parging, leaving only the stonework on the tower exposed.

Significance is also found in the historic architectural value of the Cathedral and for the architects associated with the three iterations of the building. The last design of the Cathedral was completed in the Gothic Revival style and designed by George William Grant, a well-known local architect of the time. The interior of the Cathedral was based on St. Paul's Church in Kensington, London, England. The bell tower was redesigned in 1910 by architect Frank Gardiner, also a noted New Westminster architect who, together with partner A.L. Mercer, designed many buildings in the city.

The Cathedral is substantially in its original condition in terms of both exterior and interior design and material elements. Valued interior elements include the vaulted space, the Bloomfield stained glass windows in the apse, dark-stained woodwork, the altar and reredos. Valued exterior elements include the steeply pitched rooflines, an offset buttressed tower, the asymmetrical bell tower and Gothic pointed-arch windows. Of particular note, the only bell, of the eight original bells, to survive the Great Fire still hangs in the tower.

For a detailed review of the heritage value and character-defining elements of the Cathedral, see the Statement of Significance in Appendix 2 (in the Heritage Conservation Plan). For photographs of the Cathedral in its current condition, see Appendix 8.

Application Background

The City has been working with the Parish since the first inquiry in 2013, and has always acknowledged the concept of using added density and height, beyond what is otherwise permitted in the Zoning Bylaw and OCP, in order to offset the costs of the heritage conservation required on the Cathedral. Since then, discussions with staff have focused on the overall tower size and design.

Density Bonus/Density Transfer Options

Consideration was given to using the heritage density transfer program, but further study by the City's land economist concluded that the market value of development density was not achievable, and that the market would not provide the profit necessary to restore and maintain the Cathedral. In addition, the existing zoning of the property does not offer any density to transfer.

PROPOSAL

The application would allow development of a residential tower adjacent to the Holy Trinity Cathedral, with space for a new Parish Hall, and underground parking. The current Parish Hall would be demolished. In exchange, the applicant would conduct interior renovations, a seismic upgrade, restoration of the exterior, and provide long-term legal protection to the Cathedral through Heritage Designation. The proposal also provides new space for a publically accessible plaza, and an elevator which would provide secured public pedestrian access between Carnarvon and Clarkson Streets, and a connection to the Columbia Street SkyTrain station. Public access to these areas would be secured through a covenant.

See Appendix 3-5 for the proposed site design, landscape design, and design rationale.

The project is being considered by the City as the density and height provided would be in support of:

- 1) restoring the exterior of the Cathedral;
- 2) substantially upgrading the seismic elements of the Cathedral;
- 3) renovating the interior of the Cathedral;
- 4) constructing a new Parish Hall space and publicly accessible plaza;
- 5) providing affordable housing through both secured non-market and market rental housing;
- 6) improving and securing public access from Carnarvon Street to Church Street, Clarkson Street, and the Columbia Skytrain Station; and
- 7) funding future Parish operations and maintenance.

See Appendix 3 for the Streetscape Renderings, Architectural Elevations, and Appendix 4 for the Site Landscape Drawings.

Restoration of Cathedral

The intent is to preserve the existing historic structure of the Cathedral, while undertaking a rehabilitation that will upgrade its structure and services to increase its functionality. Restoration interventions are proposed to preserve character-defining elements of the Cathedral and restore elements that have been altered over the years.

See Appendix 2 for the Heritage Conservation Plan, Appendix 5 for the Restoration Colours, and Appendix 7 for sketches of the seismic upgrading work.

Tower

The applicants are proposing to construct a 30 storey, 245 unit residential tower which includes 173 market condominium units, 30 secured market rental housing units, and 42 secured non-market rental housing units, with an overall 6.20 Floor Space Ratio (FSR) (0.17 FSR for existing church, 0.2 FSR for new church space within tower and 5.83 FSR for residential). The proposal would also include ground-level Parish-related uses within the new residential tower and five levels of underground parking.

Site Statistics	Existing	Proposed
Floor Space Ratio (FSR)	Residential: 0.0 Institutional: 0.5 Total: 0.5	Residential: 5.83 Institutional: 0.37 Total: 6.2
Building Height	30 ft. (9.14m)	288 ft (87.8 m)
Number of Storeys	up to 2	30
Site Coverage at Grade	40%	33.6%
Site Coverage at 40 feet	n/a	23%

As currently proposed, the project would meet the requirements of the City's Family-Friendly Housing Bylaw for the market condominium and secured market rental units. As such, a minimum of 30% of multi-family ownership units would be two and three bedroom (25% of multi-family rental units) with at least 10% of the total number of units being three-bedroom (5% for rental units). Through the project review process, the unit mix for the non-market rental units would be further determined through discussions with BC Housing and would be confirmed prior to formal consideration of the applications.

Tower Design

The application provides architectural design which intends for the new tower to be read as a modern reincarnation of the Cathedral's bell tower. The first few storeys pull away from the Cathedral then the building cantilevers above Cathedral in a design which is intended to mirror the Cathedral's column and buttress rhythm. The current design still retains a slender tower and increased glazing at the lower levels of the residential tower in order to provide greater visibility to the Cathedral.

Through the development review process, staff will continue to work with the applicant in regards to further ensuring this design is respectful of the Cathedral, and the adjacent building located at 520 Carnarvon Street (1899 heritage building with active HRA application). The project will also be reviewed by the New Westminster Design Panel.

DISCUSSION

Balance of Benefits

Staff recognizes that the restoration of the Cathedral exterior and seismic upgrading would require significant work, and that the applicant has made efforts to limit interior work. Staff also recognizes the strong urban and architectural design of the tower and plaza. With the inclusion of both secured market rental and secured non-market rental housing units within the development, staff now considers the balance of heritage benefits and other benefits to be more balanced with the benefits that would be conferred to the applicant through the density proposed within this project.

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

The design of the proposed residential tower seeks to be respectful of the Cathedral in terms of material and form, using vertical and horizontal setbacks at the base of the tower on the elevations closest to this building, and extensive glazing to give the appearance of lightness. However, given the height of 30 storeys, the proposed building is not consistent with City heritage policy. Staff considers that, from a heritage evaluation perspective, any building over six storeys constructed adjacent to the Cathedral would have an impact on the heritage value, as detailed below:

- *“Conserve the heritage value of an historic place.”* The heritage value of the Cathedral lies partly in its location on the site, including the space around it and the view of it from Columbia Street. The view of the Cathedral from Church Street and from Columbia Street will continue to be present.

- *“Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to an historic place or any related new construction.”* The character-defining elements of the Cathedral are predominantly being conserved and restored through the proposed conservation work.
- *“Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.”* Although every effort has been made to create a compatible tower design, the height and massing of the proposed tower is not compatible with or subordinate to the Cathedral. The height of the tower would overwhelm the Cathedral. The tower would, however, be distinguishable from the historic fabric. Further efforts could be made with material choices on the base of the tower to be more compatible with the Cathedral.
- *“Avoid adding a new feature that alters or obscures the spatial organization of the historic site and avoid introducing a new feature that is incompatible in size, scale or design with the spatial organization.”* The height and massing of the proposed tower on such a constrained site would alter and obscure the spatial organization of the site. The proposed tower would not be compatible with the Cathedral in terms of size or scale.

The proposed residential tower does not meet the “Standards & Guidelines” however; the applicant has attempted to address the heritage elements of the site as best as possible while ensuring the density could achieve the City’s housing goals and the applicant’s goals of ensuring sufficient funds remain available to support ongoing Parish operations.

FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMISSION

The Community Heritage Commission is being asked to review the application in relation to:

- sustainability and appropriateness of the heritage work, detailed in the Heritage Conservation Plan (Appendix 2);
- consistency between the level of heritage work and the zoning and density benefits that the applicant is receiving, recognizing that the density benefits are for both heritage conservation and secured market rental and non-market rental housing; and
- the design of the tower in relation to the heritage context of the Cathedral and site.

NEXT STEPS

Below is an overall outline of the anticipated development review process for this project. The bold text outlines where the applicant currently is at within the process:

1. Preliminary Report to Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC);
2. LUPC referral of applications to Council;
3. Circulation of the application to all City Departments for review;
- 4. Presentation of application to the Community Heritage Commission;**
5. Public consultation, including presentation to the Downtown Residents' Association and the hosting of an applicant-led Open House;
6. Presentation of application to the New Westminster Design Panel;
7. Section 475 and 476 Report to Council for OCP consultation with external stakeholders;
8. Presentation application to the Advisory Planning Commission;
9. Report to LUPC in regards to process update;
10. Report to Council for Housing Agreement principles;
11. Formal consideration of First and Second Readings of OCP Amendment, HRA, and Heritage Designation Bylaw by Council;
12. Public Hearing and formal consideration of Third Reading of OCP Amendment, HRA and Heritage Designation Bylaws by Council;
13. Council consideration of First, Second, and Third Readings for Housing Agreement Bylaws (market and non-market rental units); and
14. Final Consideration of OCP Amendment, HRA and Heritage Designation Bylaws by Council and Final Consideration of Housing Agreement Bylaws.

OPTIONS

The following options are available for consideration by the Community Heritage Commission:

- 1) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend that Council support the Heritage Revitalization Agreement for 514 Carnarvon St (Holy Trinity Cathedral);
- 2) That the Community Heritage Commission recommend that Council does not support the Heritage Revitalization Agreement for 514 Carnarvon St (Holy Trinity Cathedral);
- 3) That the Community Heritage Commission provide alternative recommendation.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Site Context Map

Appendix 2: Heritage Conservation Plan (Statement of Significance)

Appendix 3: Streetscape Renderings and Architectural Elevations

Appendix 4: Site Landscape Drawings

Appendix 5: Restoration Colours

Appendix 6: Heritage and Architectural Design Rationale (Floor Plans of Cathedral)

Appendix 7: Seismic Upgrade Sketches

Appendix 8: Current Photographs of the Cathedral