

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Mayor Cote and Members of Council **Date:** July 11, 2022

From: Emilie K. Adin, MCIP
Director of Climate Action, Planning and
Development **File:** REZ00209

Item #: 2022-540

Subject: **Rezoning Application for Triplex: 817 St. Andrews Street –
Comprehensive Report**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the application to rezone 817 St. Andrews Street be considered and no public hearing held, in accordance with the *Local Government Act*,

THAT notification be circulated in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

PURPOSE

To request that: 1) Council consider the application to rezone 817 St. Andrews Street and that no public hearing be held, in accordance with the *Local Government Act*; and, 2) notification be circulated in accordance with the *Local Government Act*; to enable a stratified triplex proposal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rezoning and Development Permit (DP) applications have been received to allow the construction of a stratified triplex (three units) at 817 St. Andrews Street, in the Brow of the Hill neighbourhood. The project has been designed to Passive House standards and would be the first multi-unit residential project in New Westminster to achieve Passive House certification. All units would be family-friendly and ground-oriented. Plans indicate an overall Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 0.785. The project proposes three off-street parking spaces and long-term bicycle storage in accordance with Zoning Bylaw requirements.

Applicant-led and City-led public consultation has been undertaken for the project and the applicant has responded to key community feedback. Staff recommends that the application to rezone the property be considered, and the Public Hearing waived in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

This rezoning application was initially put before Council for a waived public hearing on May 9, 2022. It was adopted on June 13, 2022. The City in June 2022 realized that it has made an administrative error in the timing of the public notifications due to changes in the *Local Government Act*. To correct this error, the City is repealing and replacing the bylaw and this report is placed before Council to begin the new approval process. This process will correct the administrative error, and no changes have been made to the content of the zoning bylaw, or the proposed project. Given this, the City is not requiring the applicant to complete any additional steps in the rezoning process, e.g. posting a sign on the property, as all required steps were completed previously.

BACKGROUND

Policy and Regulations

The Official Community Plan (OCP) land use designation for the subject property is Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing (RGO), which allows for a triplex. The property is currently zoned Single Detached Residential Districts (RS-1) and requires rezoning to allow the proposed triplex. The project is being considered under the *Duplex, Triplex, and Quadruplex: Interim Development Review Policy*. As is consistent with this policy, a Comprehensive Development (CD) zone would be created for this site. The proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8354, 2022 is Attachment 1 to this report.

As the subject site is located within the Ground Oriented Housing Development Permit Area (DPA 1.2), a DP is required to guide the form and character of the proposed development. The DP application has been reviewed concurrently through the rezoning process. Subject to Council approving the Rezoning application, the DP would be issued by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development. Further information on the policy and regulatory context of this application is available in Attachment 2.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

The proposed development consists of a three-unit stratified triplex, designed to Passive House standards for energy efficiency. Three off-street parking spaces are proposed, to be accessed from the rear lane. This is consistent with Zoning Bylaw requirements.

Figure 1: Rendering of the proposed project at 817 St. Andrews St.



Units are proposed to be two storeys, with two units fronting St. Andrews Street and one unit located at the rear of the building. All units would be family-friendly, containing three bedrooms. The proposal is for slab-on-grade construction, and basement areas are not proposed. Private outdoor space and bike parking requirements would be met. One on-site tree would be removed, eight off-site trees would be retained, and two replacement trees would be provided. Additional site context information is included in Attachment 3 and project statistics in Attachment 4. The applicant’s design rationale and project drawings are Attachments 5 and 6 to this report.

DISCUSSION

Overall Evaluation

The proposed triplex would help meet key OCP objectives:

1. Increase opportunities for family-friendly, ground-oriented infill housing; and,
2. Produce a highly energy efficient building, thus assisting the City in meeting its energy and emissions targets, in a small way.

As the proposed project also satisfies the interim requirements for triplex developments with regard to density, design form, parking, and access, it is an appropriate and successful pilot project for consideration under the *Duplex, Triplex, and Quadruplex: Interim Development Review Policy*.

Building Design, Massing and Transition

The applicant has proposed a contemporary expression with elements that reflect the architectural character of St. Andrews Street. The proposed design is generally unified, with massing oriented towards the centre of the lot, and defined front entries. The two-storey units oriented toward St. Andrews Street are intended to transition between the neighbouring single detached house to the west, and the mid-rise apartment building to the east. The rear unit would not be visible from St. Andrews Street. Elements such as front gable roof lines, traditional cladding materials, and porch posts have been included to integrate the triplex into the existing streetscape. Staff considers the proposed design to be generally consistent with the guidelines contained in the Interim Review Policy.

Passive Design Exclusion for FSR

The City's Passive Design Exclusion policy supports additional floor area for single detached dwellings built to higher performance standards, including 0.05 FSR for Passive House projects. Although FSR for triplexes has not been specifically set under this policy, staff considers it reasonable to apply a similar floor area exclusion to this project. The Interim Review Policy identifies a permissible FSR of 0.75 for triplex projects and this project is proposed at 0.785 FSR.

Parking Considerations

Under the Infill Townhouse program, the applicant is required to provide three off-street resident parking spaces and one visitor/loading space. This proposal meets the requirements for the number of resident parking spaces. However, the project proposes the elimination of the visitor/loading requirement.

In their rationale for the proposed variance (see Attachment 5), the applicant notes that the triplex would be more similar in size to a duplex (for which visitor/loading spaces are not required) than a townhouse project. The applicant further notes that: visitors could easily arrive by transit; on-street parking is available on both sides of St. Andrews Street; and, there is an on-street loading zone located less than 25 metres (80 feet) away from the site. Given the building typology, the site's proximity to public transit, and the availability of space in the neighbourhood for on-street parking and loading, staff consider the variance reasonable.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Applicant-led Consultation

Applicant-led consultation included an online survey, virtual open house, and project website, and residents within 100 metres of the project were notified of opportunities to submit feedback. One person attended the open house and six survey responses were received. Attachment 7 includes a description of the consultation process and all received feedback.

Survey feedback indicated that over 80% of respondents support the project. The majority of community feedback was focused on support for the project's energy efficient design and provision of family-friendly housing in Brow of the Hill. The building design and overall density received mixed support. Staff notes that the proposed density is consistent with the Interim Review Policy.

City-led Consultation

City-led consultation included a project website and online survey, published on Be Heard New West. Residents within 100 metres of the project were notified of the online survey. In total, three survey responses were received and feedback focused on the project's proposed density, parking impacts, and potential noise from proposed heat pumps.

Staff notes that the proposed resident parking is consistent with Zoning Bylaw requirements, and that noise generated by heat pumps is regulated by the Noise Bylaw. Heat pump noise would further be mitigated through their siting and use of buffers (e.g., vegetation and fencing), as detailed in Attachment 5. All feedback received through the City-led process is included in Attachment 8.

Applicant Response and Revisions

The applicant has addressed consultation feedback in the following ways:

- Included vertical elements found elsewhere in the neighbourhood, such as porch posts, cladding, and fencing, to better integrate with the existing streetscape;
- Reduced the size of the proposed carports to reduce overall site coverage; and,
- Increased the size of the garbage enclosure area to ensure all waste bins are screened from view of the lane.

Staff considers the above changes to reasonably address the community feedback received.

REVIEW PROCESS

Staff considers that the applicant has reasonably addressed public feedback, and that the application meets City policy for waiver of the Public Hearing. Given this, the development application review process is as follows:

1. Preliminary Report to Council;
2. Applicant-led public consultation, including dissemination of information through the local Residents Association;
3. City-led public consultation, including the creation of a Be Heard New West webpage and survey;
4. Council consideration of the rezoning application and issuance of notice of waiving the Public Hearing (**WE ARE HERE**);

- 5. Council consideration of First, Second, and Third Reading;
- 6. Council consideration of Adoption of the Bylaw; and,
- 7. Issuance of the Development Permit by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development.

As there are fewer than six units proposed, and the form of development is consistent with the OCP, the application was not forwarded to the New Westminster Design Panel nor the Advisory Planning Commission for review or comment.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The City has a project-based team approach for reviewing development applications. A staff-led project team was assigned for reviewing this project consisting of staff from Engineering (Servicing and Transportation), Fire, Electrical, Parks and Recreation, and Climate Action, Planning and Development (Building, Planning, Trees, and Heritage) Departments who provided comments throughout the development review process.

OPTIONS

The following options are available for Council’s consideration:

- 1. That Council consider the application to rezone 817 St. Andrews Street and no Public Hearing held, in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.
- 2. That notification be circulated in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.
- 3. That Council provide Staff with alternative feedback.

Staff recommends Options 1 and 2.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1. Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8354, 2022
- Attachment 2. Policy and Regulations Summary
- Attachment 3. Site Characteristics and Context
- Attachment 4. Project Statistics Table
- Attachment 5. Applicant’s Design Rationale
- Attachment 6. Project Drawings
- Attachment 7. Applicant-led Consultation Summary
- Attachment 8. City-led Consultation Summary
- Attachment 9. Engineering Servicing Memo

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Wendee Lang, Development Planner

This report was reviewed by:
Mike Watson, A/ Supervisor of Development Planning

This report was approved by:
Emilie K. Adin, Director, Climate Action Planning and Development
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer