

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: New Westminster Design Panel **Date:** December 13, 2022

From: Dilys Huang, Development Planner **File:** REZ00204

Item #: 2022-756

Subject: **102-128 East Eighth Avenue and 721 Cumberland Street: Rezoning and Development Permit for Infill Townhouses**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel review the design submission and provide comments for applicant and staff consideration; and

THAT the New Westminster Design Panel consider a motion of support or non-support for the proposed development project.

PURPOSE

Rezoning and Development Permit applications have been received for 102-128 East Eighth Avenue and 721 Cumberland Street. The proposed development includes 55 infill townhouse units with an overall floor space ratio of 1.0 across eight buildings. A total of 92 off-street parking spaces would be located in an underground parkade, and a loading space would be provided as well. The project also includes a mix of long-term and short-term bicycle parking spaces.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to the New Westminster Design Panel in regards to the overall project design and to receive comments from the Panel, with special consideration of the items noted in the Design Considerations section of this report.

GUIDING POLICY AND REGULATIONS

Official Community Plan Land Use Designation

The subject properties are designated Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing (RGO), which is described, in part, as follows:

Purpose: To allow a mix of ground oriented infill housing forms which are complementary to the existing neighbourhood character. Generally forms with a higher number of units are expected to be located on larger properties. Units can be attached, detached or a combination of the two.

Principal Forms and Uses: Single detached dwellings, single detached dwellings on a compact lot, duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, cluster houses, townhouses, rowhouses and other equivalent ground oriented housing forms. Lots with single detached dwellings may also include a secondary suite and/or a detached accessory dwelling unit.

Maximum Density: Low density multiple unit residential.

The proposed development is consistent with the intent of the RGO land use designation and therefore, no Official Community Plan amendment would be required for this proposed development.

Development Permit Area

The subject site is located within the Ground Oriented Housing Development Permit Area (DPA 1.2), which refers development of infill townhouse properties to DPA 1.3 (Infill Townhouses and Rowhouses). The intent of this DPA is to encourage small scale infill projects, such as infill townhouses and rowhouses that are complementary to the existing single detached dwelling context through appropriate building form, scale, and location.

The DPA 1.3 guidelines can be accessed via the following link:

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/OCP_DPA_1.3_Townhouses_and_Rowhouses_\(Consolidated_June_2020\).pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/OCP_DPA_1.3_Townhouses_and_Rowhouses_(Consolidated_June_2020).pdf)

Zoning Bylaw

The subject properties are currently zoned Single Detached Residential (RS-1). Since the proposal does not conform to this existing zone, the properties would need to be rezoned to Infill Townhouse and Rowhouse Residential (RT) and be consolidated.

Family Friendly Housing Policy

As per the City's Family-Friendly Housing Policy, the development would be required to provide a minimum of 30% two and three bedroom units, of which at least 10% of the

overall number of units would need to contain three or more bedrooms. Based on the information provided by the applicant, all of the proposed units would have at least two bedrooms, and 53 out of the 55 proposed units (96%) would have three or more bedrooms.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Characteristics and Context

The subject site, comprising 10 properties, is located in the McBride-Sapperton neighbourhood. It is situated on the south side of East Eighth Avenue between Cumberland Street and York Street. The lots have an approximate combined area of 6,410.6 sq. m. (69,003.3 sq. ft.). The site has a fairly steep gradient, with a difference of approximately 17 m. (55 ft.) from the high end at the north-east corner sloping down toward Cumberland Street and the rear lane at the south-west corner (approximately 11% diagonal slope and 8% horizontal slope). Similar to neighbouring residential lots, the subject properties currently contain single detached dwellings ranging from the mid-1940s to late 1950s.

The properties to the north across East Eighth Avenue are also designated (RGO) Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing, while those to the east, south, and west are designated (RD) Residential – Detached and Semi-Detached Housing. The site is located one block from the Justice Institute of BC. The təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre is located approximately two blocks to the south. A site context map is provided below (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Site Context Map

Proposal

The proposed development consists of eight buildings containing 55 infill townhouse units with two or two and a half storeys. The buildings would be oriented parallel to East Eighth Avenue on both sides of a central pedestrian courtyard. The proposal includes an overall density of 1.0 floor space ratio (FSR), allocated between an above grade FSR of 0.83 and a below grade FSR of 0.17. Proposed unit sizes range from approximately 94.3 sq. m. (1,014.8 sq. ft.) to 126.8 sq. m. (1,364.6 sq. ft.), with most of the units (three bedrooms) falling between 112.6 sq. m. (1,212.1 sq. ft.) and 118.1 sq. m. (1,271.6 sq. ft.).

The applicant is proposing 92 off-street parking spaces, which include 86 resident stalls and six visitor stalls within a one and a half level underground parkade. A surface loading space is proposed off the lane. EV charging infrastructure would be provided in accordance with zoning requirements. An elevator would connect the underground parking to the central courtyard and street levels.

A total of 69 long term bicycle parking spaces are proposed within the parkade, along with short term bicycle parking spaces at both ends of the central courtyard (six total).

Project Statistics

	Permitted / Required Under RT Zoning	Proposed
Existing Site Area (Gross)	-	6,410.6 sq. m. (69,003.3 sq. ft.)
Site Area (Net)	-	6,354.9 sq. m. (68,403.5 sq. ft.)
Site Frontage	-	150.9 m. (495.2 ft.)
Average Lot Depth	-	42.5 m. (139.3 ft.)
Total FSR Inclusive of Basement	1.0 FSR	1.0 FSR
Total FSR Excluding Basement	0.85 FSR	0.83 FSR
Building Height	10.67 m. (35 ft.)	8.16 m. (26.77 ft.) to 10.27 m. (33.7 ft.)
Residential Units	-	55 units
Unit Mix and Family-Friendly Housing	Minimum 30% two and three bedroom units, of which 10% are three or more bedrooms	1 bedroom units: 0 (0%) 2 bedroom units: 2 (4%) 3 bedroom units: 52 (95%) 4 bedroom units: 1 (2%)
Off-Street Parking		
Resident	55 spaces	86 spaces
Visitor	6 spaces	6 spaces
Total	61 spaces	93 spaces
Loading	1 space (may be shared with a visitor space)	1 space (not shared)
Bicycle Parking	55 spaces	69 spaces (long term) 6 spaces (short term)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The applicant's design rationale and architectural and landscape drawings are included as Appendix A. Staff would appreciate comments from the New Westminster Design Panel (NWDP) on the proposed development, including how it responds to the Infill Townhouse and Rowhouse Development Permit Area (DPA) guidelines. Some items identified by staff for consideration by the Panel are as follows:

Building Massing, Streetscape Expression, and Transition

Due to the larger site, four different architectural schemes/variations are proposed across the eight buildings. This is intended to visually break up the site into sections and give the appearance of several smaller, separate infill townhouse developments, rather than a single large townhouse complex. The main entrances of the narrower front units are proposed to front onto East Eighth Avenue, while those for the rear units would face the central pedestrian courtyard. The street-fronting end units are rotated so that they are oriented toward Cumberland and York Streets. Common site entries are proposed along the street and lane frontages. Due to the sloping grades, there are retaining walls/structures proposed through the site, including along some of the site frontages, notably along Cumberland and York Streets and the south-east corner by Building 8.

Building Materials

In terms of materials, the DPA guidelines call for the use of durable, long lasting, and high quality materials. Masonry, lapped siding, and other textured cladding materials are strongly encouraged, especially at the ground floor level. Synthetic materials intended to mimic natural materials are not recommended.

The applicant has provided a material and colour palette that includes painted Hardie siding in various styles (e.g. shingles, board and batten, horizontal lap, panels with Easy Trim Reveals); painted trims, fascias, and gutters in charcoal and white; standard black or white vinyl windows and sliding doors; and shingled roofs.

On-Site Accessibility

While recognizing that the overall site has a significant slope, the applicant has made some further adjustments to the proposal from an accessibility perspective. These include relocating the visitor stalls and the waste collection area into the parkade (previously outside by the lane), designing the eastern end unit of Building 8 as an adaptable unit, and proposing barrier-free access from either the street or the lane for 33 units. The applicant noted that the overall number of stairs could not be reduced due to the steep nature of the site (8 to 12%); however they have revised the stepping to provide barrier-free access from the elevator at the courtyard level to the two western units of Building 7 (compared to zero units initially).

Open Space

The DPA guidelines call for landscape design that is focused on privacy, open space and rainwater management, optimizing livability, and increasing neighbourliness.

A central common amenity area with picnic tables, benches, and a barbeque is proposed between Buildings 2 and 3. An enclosed dog run/relief area would be provided to the north of this central amenity area by East Eighth Avenue. Another common amenity area with benches and a children's play structure is proposed above the parkade entrance between Buildings 5 and 6. Pockets of resting, seating, and meeting areas would also be provided off of the central pedestrian courtyard. Open space for individual dwelling units is proposed through the use of private patios, lawn, and decks. Permeable pavers would be used for the off-slab private patios south of the rear units. Some gardening plots are also shown to the south of the units in Buildings 7 and 8 near the lane.

Questions for the Design Panel's Consideration

In addition to seeking general comments from the NWDP in regard to the overall design of the proposed development and the above-mentioned design considerations, staff has identified the following aspects for the NWDP to provide specific input on:

1. The project design, including the selection of building materials and colour scheme, and how the proposed development addresses the Infill Townhouse and Rowhouse Development Permit Area guidelines;
2. The overall scale and massing of the proposed buildings;
3. The streetscape expression, transition between the proposed development and neighbouring properties, and how the project fits within the surrounding neighbourhood context;
4. The proposed site layout, including the pedestrian walkways and siting of the common areas;
5. Overall on-site accessibility, with recognition that individual townhouse units are not intended to function as accessible dwelling units; and
6. The proposed outdoor common amenity areas, central courtyard, private open space, and other landscaping features.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Applicant Submission Package (Design Rationale and Architectural/
Landscape Drawings)

This report was prepared by:
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