

Attachment 1
*Applicant's Design
Rationale*

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(Revision 1)

Development Services + Planning – City of New Westminster
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC V3L 1H9

Project Summary and Design Rationale
Proposed redevelopment of 728 First Street and 102/104 8th Avenue, New Westminster, BC.

Site information:

This development *Site* is comprised of two fee-simple properties:

Property A:

Civic Address: 728 First Street, New Westminster
PID: 011-341-467
Legal Description: LOT "D" SUBURBAN BLOCK 13 PLAN 8662
Zoning: *Single Detached Residential (RS-1)*
Land Use Designation: *Residential – Detached and Semi-Detached Housing (RD)*

Property B:

Civic Address: 102/104 8th Avenue, New Westminster, BC.
PID: 011-341-424
Legal Description: LOT "C" SUBURBAN BLOCK 13 PLAN 8662
Zoning: *Single Detached Residential (RS-1)*
Land Use Designation: *Residential – Detached and Semi-Detached Housing (RD)*

Proposed Development Description:

1. General Project Description:

There is currently a single-family residence on Property A. There is currently an existing non-conforming duplex on Property B. To facilitate this project, the demolition of both buildings would be required. The two properties would be consolidated to facilitate a stratified townhouse development.

The proposed project consists of ten (10) side-by-side townhouses, divided equally between two (2) buildings. Total proposed maximum gross floor area is 17,668.8 square feet. Carports with lane access are proposed.

2. Site Planning:

The *Site* offers several opportunities based on it being bounded by two streets and a lane. 8th Avenue is a busier thoroughfare, with a more urban condition, while First Street presents a more residential character, primarily servicing only local traffic.

The proposed development consists of two buildings, each with five side-by-side townhouses. Between the buildings would be an inner courtyard connecting parking access at laneway end and a public courtyard entry point at the First Street end.

The site slopes upwards from the low point at the North-East corner to the high point at the South-West corner. The slope is used to create a number of integrated level transitions in the landscape, and a stepping of building heights and elements.

3. Massing / Size / Height / Orientation:

The proposed approximate overall height of both buildings is less than the maximum allowable height of 10.67 m (35'-0"). The approximate highest point of Building A is proposed under 10.48 m (34'-5") high and Building B is under 8.22 m (27'-0") high.

Building A:

- The units of Building A all have a total of two and a half levels, with a third level roof deck.
- Building A is oriented along 8th Avenue, with four units (1-4) having their primary entries facing North to 8th Avenue, and one unit (5) having its primary entry facing First Street.
- The heights of each unit are varied such that they step down with the existing slope. This adds a level of variety and individuation that plays against the uniformity of the elevations.
- Unit entries, and their attendant outdoor spaces, are elevated from the street grade to enhance privacy and create a transition zone from the street.
- The massing of Unit 5 responds to the more urban corner street condition through its different two and a half storey form. Its third floor is smaller than the lower two, and occupies the centre of the floor plate, serving to minimize the overall massing of the building. The aim is to strengthen the presence at the corner while keeping the overall scale closer to the single-family housing that sits further away from 8th Avenue.
- Unit 1 (end unit at alley) also responds to its corner and end-wall location, although with unique aspects of a more subtle nature.

Building B:

- The units of Building B all have a total of three levels, with the lowest level a basement condition.
- Four units (6-9) have their front entries facing north to the project's inner courtyard.
- Unit 10 (facing First Street), has its main entry oriented to the street. It is elevated from the street grade, creating a transition zone to enhance privacy. Its forms work with those of Unit 5, while reducing in scale to respond to the adjacent single-family neighbourhood.
- Units 8, 9 and 10 have minor building projections that extend beyond the allowable Building Envelope, as defined by the 45 degree building envelope construction line projected from the side property line. These extensions are located on the South face of the building.

4. Setbacks:

Given that this proposal is a hybrid between a street-oriented townhouse layout and a courtyard-oriented development, this proposal proposes a merging of the two applicable setback standards (“street-oriented corner setbacks”, and “courtyard development setbacks”) as detailed in the *New Westminster Official Community Plan - Townhouse and Rowhouse Development Permit Guidelines*:

- The proposed building setbacks along First Street for both buildings adhere to the front yard setback required for courtyard developments of 4.27m (14'-0").
- The proposed side yard setback for Building B adheres to the more restrictive setback for courtyard developments of 4.27m (14'-0"). Eave and fin wall elements project maximum 0.61 m (2'-0") into the required side yard.
- Both buildings are sited to have a rear yard setback that is in excess of the minimum required rear yard setback for both street-oriented corner and courtyard setbacks.
- The proposed front yard setback for Building A along 8th Avenue aims to strike a balance between the “flanking street” side yard setback for street-oriented corner developments (min 1.83m (6'-0")), and the primary street front setback for both street-oriented corner and courtyard developments (min 4.27m (14'-0")). Building A is sited to have a minimum front yard setback of 3.22m (10'-7").
- Proposed Projections along streets:
 - Building A:
 - Distance from property line along 8th Avenue:
 - Eave minimum: 2.77 m (9'-1")
 - Entry cantilevered canopy minimum 2.61 m (8'-7")
 - Fin wall minimum: 2.77 m (9'-1")
 - Distance from property line along First Street:
 - Entry cantilevered canopy minimum 3.80 m (12'-6")
 - Building B:
 - Distance from property line along First Street:
 - Eave minimum: 3.85 m (12'-7")
 - Fin wall minimum: 3.85 m (12'-7")
 - Window well: 3.19 m (10'-6")
- The proposed courtyard width ranges from 27'-11 ½" to 31'-5", and varies due to the articulated exterior walls of both buildings.
- The Courtyard Entry Pavilion is sited 0.77m (2'-6") from the First Street property line. This siting allows the required clearance between the principal building and the detached accessory building to be achieved while also not infringing on the private open space of Unit 5.
- The carport structure posts are located 15'-0" from the property line along 8th Avenue and the carport roof extensions are no closer than 6'-0" from the rear property line.

5. Architectural Expression:

In keeping with the *New Westminster Official Community Plan - Townhouse and Rowhouse Development Permit guidelines*, the project aims to balance simple and contemporary building forms with a finer scale of detail and composition.

The whole project proposes a restrained material range, along with a traditional palette of colours.

Each of the two buildings is comprised of a central stretch of three (3) repeating unit forms capped at each end with units having more articulated and unique characters.

- The design aims for a balance between a the whole and its parts, so that the project has a unity of expression balanced with the “architectural diversity” required for individual unit identity and a “varied streetscape.”
- The definition of each unit is clearly expressed while the whole is tied together through the scale and architectural articulation: shared shapes, forms, detailing, common materiality, and common landscaping.
- Each unit’s main entry is critical to their expression. Each is denoted through the use of a defining vertical element and contrasting door colour. All entries have weather protection in the form of cantilevered canopies.
- The repeating units include variations that balance their primary regularity/repetition with a secondary level of uniqueness.
- The end units are designed to meet two prime objectives: 1) to address their own unique site circumstances and opportunities, and 2) to resolve each of the two building blocks in a manner which balances the whole composition. Their uniqueness ranges from the more subtle (Units 1 and 6 facing the parking structure and laneway) to increasingly different expressions from Unit 10 and Unit 5.
- The most unique unit is Unit 5. It’s simplicity and bolder shapes directly face the street corner and the larger buildings further north along 8th Avenue. While different in its design language, it relates to the other units through shared shapes, forms, and window detailing.

6. Open Space and Landscape Design:

Private open space:

- Generous at-grade private yards are provided for all 10 units, ranging from approximately 198 – 242 square feet in size.
- All units in Building A have a private third level deck, ranging from approximately 150 – 157 square feet in size.
- Units 1-4 in Building A have a small outdoor at-grade patio facing 8th Avenue, ranging from approximately 56- 65 square feet in size.

Shared open space:

- A linear public courtyard separates the two buildings. It will have gated entries at either end.
- Along First Street, the public courtyard entry is defined by a covered open-air pavilion. This structure will serve as a zone of weather protection complete with mailbox access, bench seating, secured entry access and covered common table/seating area located behind a low privacy fence. The open-air pavilion is flanked by a sunken short term bike storage area to the South and a common outdoor lounge seating area to the North.
- Approximately half the width of the courtyard will accommodate the ‘back yards’ of Building A, with the remaining width accommodating window wells to the lower-level windows of Building B, landscaping and stair and ramp transitions.

- The courtyard will have two trees along with benched gathering space.

Landscape Design:

- The location of several existing trees on the site requires their removal to facilitate the *Project*.
- The grades along the street-facing property lines will be required be lowered due to city-required redesign/upgrading of boulevards and sidewalks. Due to this, hedges and trees located in close proximity to those property lines will need to be removed.
- Any removal of protected trees will be remediated with double their number.
- Proposed landscape design elements:
 - Soft landscaping:
 - Utilization of drought-resistant planting.
 - Trees along street front enhance privacy.
 - Trees in courtyard and tree in the rear yard of Unit 3 minimize overlook between buildings.
 - Trees in the rear yards of Building B minimize overlook between Building B and the adjacent property to the South.
 - Permeable surfaces are used where feasible, including permeable pavers for parking.
 - A mixture of metal and wood fencing of various heights is proposed, with the character and height of the fence determined by its function.

7. Off-Street Vehicle Parking, loading and Bicycle Parking:

Vehicle parking:

- One covered parking stall per unit.
- One wheelchair accessible stall is proposed with accessible ramped access to courtyard levels.
- One loading/visitor parking stall located adjacent to the neighbouring property at 724 First Street, 1'-4" from the side property line. This stall will be buffered from the neighbouring property by the existing cedar hedge and fencing along the property line.
- All stalls are directly accessible from the lane.
- Planting is provided where feasible in between stalls.
- All assigned stalls will be equipped with electrical vehicle charging infrastructure and charging stations.
- Covered carports are provided for all unit-assigned stalls. The carport structure is divided into four separate roof planes to allow the roofs to step down with the sloped lane. The resulting design serves to minimize the visual impact of the carport massing.

Bicycle Parking:

- Each unit will be supplied with lockable bicycle storage accessible from the courtyard or the unit's rear-yard. There is a mixture one and two-bike storage lockers.
- Six short-term bicycle stalls will be supplied adjacent to the courtyard entrance and are placed within a sunken court.

8. Garbage and Recycling:

- A generous number of garbage and recycling bins can be housed within a covered area located with easy access from all units.
- There is an easily maneuverable, flat path from the recycling /garbage area to a lane collection point. The collection path would see the bins taken north through the gated enclosure and then west through the pedestrian access gate and along the path to the lane.
- The area is screened from view from both inside and outside of the development through retaining walls, metal fencing, and gated access.

9. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):

This project aims to follow sound CPTED principals:

- The zones of private, semi-private and public spaces are well defined through the use of elevational changes, fencing, planting and other landscaping components.
- Private yard space to be secured with gates.
- The entry to the Courtyard is defined through physical barriers.
- Fencing facilities privacy but will not obstruct sightlines.
- Interior courtyard surveillance is fostered through the incorporation of generous windows from all levels of every unit into the inner courtyard.
- The courtyard is proposed to be well lit, and the trees are to be small and vertical in character to minimize interference with sightlines.
- Appropriate safety lighting strategies in outdoor areas will be implemented to provide secure access and path throughout the development.
- Carport areas are to have adequate, motion detecting lighting. Unobstructed visibility along the length of the carport is maintained.

10. Sustainability:

- EV charging infrastructure will be supplied for each assigned parking stall.
- High performance building standards, to meet Step 4 of the BC Step Code.
- Passive solar design elements such as operable windows oriented to facilitate cross ventilation within units, and strategic landscape shading will be implemented.

- Accommodation for future solar panels.
- Specified materials will aim to incorporate low VOC products, sustainably produced materials, and materials with long-lasting and durable qualities.

Conformance of Proposed Development with Applicable City Policies:

The *Project* is consistent with the aims of various City of New Westminster policy objectives.

New Westminster Official Community Plan (OCP):

These properties were considered for *Infill Townhouse* land use designation during the last *OCP*, and are to be included in the upcoming Infill Housing Phase One Monitoring Program in 2022. While this proposal is not in alignment with the current *OCP* designation for the Site of *Residential – Detached and Semi-Detached Housing (RD)*, it is in keeping with the current aims of the *City of New Westminster* Planning Department. The appetite for projects of this nature has increased significantly since the last *OCP* updates in 2017. The *Project* aligns with the current aims of *New Westminster* planning staff for sites for this nature and location, and the pursuit of this project has been encouraged by city staff. To facilitate this project, an *OCP* amendment would be required to change the land use designation from *Residential Semi-Detached Housing (RD)* to *Residential Ground-oriented Infill Housing (RGO)* or *Residential – Infill Townhouse (RT)*.

New Westminster Family-Friendly Housing Policy:

The *Project* meets and exceeds the requirements of the City of New Westminster's Family-friendly housing policy. While the policy requires developments such as this to have 30% 2-3 bedroom units and 10% 3+ bedroom units, this proposal would see all units be 3+ bedroom units.

Zoning Bylaw:

To facilitate this *Project*, the properties would need to be amalgamated and re-zoned from *Single Detached Residential (RS-1)* to *Infill Townhouse and Rowhouse Residential (RT)*. This proposal meets the regulations for the RT zone. *Residential Ground-oriented Infill Housing (RGO)* or *Residential – Infill Townhouse (RT)*.

Development Permit Area:

Any *OCP* amendment to either *Residential Ground-oriented Infill Housing (RGO)* or *Residential – Infill Townhouse (RT)*, would result in the *Project* being subject to the guidelines for Development Permit Areas 1.3 *Townhouses and Rowhouses*. This proposal meets the general aims of those guidelines for townhouse development.

Infill projects such as this are encouraged to be complimentary in location and scale to the surrounding neighbourhood. They can serve as a transition from larger more urban forms (such as the building diagonally across 8th and First) to single family residential.

This *Project's* provides units adequately sized for families, something currently in short supply within the *City of New Westminster*.

Summary:

This project aims to provide the Glenbrook North neighbourhood with much needed family housing. Ten 3+ bedroom homes located within a short walk to the services of Royal Square Mall, Terry Hughes and Queen's parks, École Glenbrook Middle and Herbert Spencer Elementary schools, the Justice Institute, and soon the new pool and facilities of the Temesew'txw Aquatic Community Centre and Centennial complex. The design aims to mediate the larger scale buildings and traffic of 8th Avenue with the existing single-family neighbourhood beyond. The architecture gives individual identity to each home while knitting their appearance together into a balanced whole. The two buildings are separated by an open landscaped courtyard and offer private outdoor spaces for each residence. The proposal includes the infrastructure for EV charging, ecologically sensitive landscaping and high-performance building standards . . . a healthy environment within the growing city.

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Regards,

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