

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: June 26, 2023

From: Jackie Teed, Acting Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development
File: DVP00696

Item #: 2023-416

Subject: **Development Variance Permit (300 Duncan Street, 313 to 327 Blackley Street, and 326 to 340 Mercer Street): Permit to Vary Off-Street Visitor Parking and Permit Tandem Parking – Notice of Consideration of Issuance**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council provide notice that it will consider issuance of a Development Variance Permit (DVP00696) to reduce the required off-street visitor parking by 43% and permit tandem parking for a mixed-use, multi-family development at 300 Duncan Street, 313 to 327 Blackley Street, and 326 to 340 Mercer Street.

PURPOSE

To request that Council issue notice that it will consider a Development Variance Permit (DVP00696) to reduce the required off-street visitor parking by 43% and permit tandem parking for a mixed-use, multi-family development at 300 Duncan Street, 313 to 327 Blackley Street, and 326 to 340 Mercer Street.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Development Permit (DP) and Development Variance Permit (DVP) applications have been received to allow development of 146 residential townhouse units, and 14 commercial units at 300 Duncan Street, 313 to 327 Blackley Street and 326 to 340 Mercer Street. A DVP to reduce the required off-street visitor parking by 43%, and allow for a portion of off-street resident parking to be provided in a tandem configuration (32%), is required to facilitate the proposal. As this variance does not meet the City's conditions for delegated DVPs, Council issuance of the DVP is required.

The project would require a second minor DVP to vary setback and building siting requirements, and to vary a Zoning Bylaw requirement for a scooter charging area (more appropriate to projects with underground parkades). This DVP would meet the City's conditions for delegation of minor DVPs and would be issued by the Director of Climate Action Planning and Development later in the application review process.

BACKGROUND

Previous Applications

The applicant submitted an OCP amendment application in May 2014, to develop a Master Plan for the Queensborough Eastern Node Neighbourhood. The Master Plan process identified the appropriate land use designations and created design guidelines that amended the Queensborough Community Plan, which is a schedule to the OCP. Council endorsed the Master Plan and rezoned the properties in 2016.

Policy and Regulation

The proposed project is consistent with the OCP and existing zoning of the site, which designates the subject site as (RM) Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings and (ML) Mixed Use – Low Rise. The site is located within the Queensborough Eastern Node (QEN) Development Permit Area (DPA) and is subject to the requirements of the Queensborough Eastern Neighbourhood Node Master Plan. The lots are zoned a combination of Queensborough Townhouse Districts (RT-3A) for the townhouse portion of the site and Comprehensive Development Districts (Mercer High Street) (CD-64) for the mixed-use portion of the site. A summary of related City policies and regulations is included in Attachment 1.

Development Variance Permit

The variances do not meet the criteria for delegated DVPs given that greater than five units are proposed, and a relaxation to parking requirements is requested. As such, Council consideration is required. The proposed variances are subject to the *Policy Approach to Considering Requests for Variances*, which was adopted by Council on January 28, 2008. This is a policy-based approach to the consideration of variance applications. This approach involves a set of questions against which the variance is analyzed for the purposes of clarifying benefits and the necessity of the variance. The evaluation criteria are included in Attachment 2.

Development Permit

The applicant has submitted a DP application. This DP is to facilitate a form and character review of the proposal, and would be considered by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development, following Council consideration of the subject DVP.

Site Characteristics and Context

The subject site is comprised of seven properties located in the Queensborough Eastern Node Neighbourhood, and bounded by Duncan Street, Mercer Street, Blackley Street, and the Stanley Greenway. North of the property, across Duncan Street, are industrial uses as well as an active rail line. To the east of the site are lands also included in the Queensborough Eastern Node Master Plan, intended for commercial and residential uses. To the south, across Blackley Street, are single-detached houses zoned for industrial uses. West of the site, on the other side of the Stanley Greenway, is a mix of townhouses and vacant lands designated for townhouse development.

Figure 1: Site Context Map with the development site in red and orange



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A total of 146 family-friendly, townhouse units are proposed, which would be contained within 27 buildings across the site. Drawings indicate an overall proposed density of 0.78 Floor Space Ratio (FSR). The buildings that front onto Mercer Street would be located in the CD-64 zone and are proposed to contain small-scale commercial retail uses at grade. The project proposes a total of 292 off-street residential parking spaces. The project also accommodates 220 long-term, and 12 short-term bicycle spaces, which is in excess of Zoning Bylaw requirements.

As is typical of townhouse projects in Queensborough, resident parking would be accommodated in attached, below unit garages, a portion of which (32%) would be in a tandem configuration. A total of 17 visitor spaces are proposed, which is less than required by the Zoning Bylaw (by 13 spaces). The project would provide eight

commercial parking spaces, including one accessible space, in accordance with Zoning Bylaw requirements. Detailed project statistics are included as Attachment 4.

DISCUSSION

Requested Variances

The project proposes off-street visitor parking below that required by the Zoning Bylaw. Additionally, 92 off-street resident spaces would be provided in a tandem configuration, requiring access through a parking space, rather than a driveway as required by the Zoning Bylaw. The proposed variances are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Proposed Zoning Bylaw Variances

| Characteristic | Zoning Bylaw Requirement | Proposed |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Off-street Visitor Parking | 30 spaces (0.2 spaces per dwelling unit) | 17 spaces (0.12 spaces per dwelling unit) |
| Off-street Parking Access | Access shall be by driveways or ramps | Access to 68% of parking spaces shall be by driveways or ramps |

ANALYSIS

Off-Street Visitor Parking Reduction

The proposed off-street parking for the project is detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Proposed Off-Street Parking

| Characteristic | Zoning Bylaw Requirement | Proposed |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Off-street Parking | | |
| Resident | 219 | 292 |
| Visitor | 30 | 17 |
| Commercial | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 257 | 317 |

As noted above, the project proposes 13 fewer off-street dedicated visitor parking spaces than that required by the Zoning Bylaw (43% reduction). However, this decrease in visitor parking is more than offset by additional resident parking. The applicant has proposed to accommodate visitor demand across the site in three ways:

- Providing 17 dedicated visitor parking spaces;
- Providing residential parking in excess of minimum requirements, which may allow visitors to use surplus spaces and driveway aprons; and,
- Allowing commercial and visitor spaces to be shared, given that peak demand for residential and commercial visits occur at different times of the day (which would be secured through a parking covenant and signed appropriately).

Tandem Parking Configuration

As is common of townhouse developments in Queensborough, a portion of the attached garages would be built to accommodate two parking spaces in a tandem configuration. The Zoning Bylaw requires that access to 100% of parking spaces be via a driveway; however, the applicant is proposing that only 68% of parking spaces be accessed via a driveway, with access to 32% provided through another parking space.

Staff are supportive of the proposed tandem parking variance, given:

- The unique land attributes of Queensborough, due to its location in the floodplain, limit the ability to provide underground parking for townhouse projects; and,
- The proportion of tandem spaces proposed is fewer than 50%, which is the maximum staff considers reasonable.

Updated Parking Requirements

Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8396, 2023 would implement Stage 3 of the sustainable transportation Zoning Bylaw amendments aimed at updating multi-unit residential parking rates based updated demand analysis. This bylaw was presented to Council on May 29, 2023 and was given three readings on June 12, 2023.

The project's proposed visitor parking (0.12 spaces per unit) is in-line with the City's anticipated future visitor parking requirements (0.1 spaces per unit). Staff are bringing forward the DVP for this project ahead of adoption of this bylaw, given that review by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is required prior to consideration of adoption, and this is anticipated to take some time. As such, in order to continue to move the application forward in a timely manner, staff recommend that Council approve the DVP at this time.

REVIEW PROCESS

The proposed review process for this application is:

1. Report to Council to request that Council issue notice that it will consider issuance of a DVP to reduce off-street visitor parking and permit tandem parking **(WE ARE HERE)**;
2. Response to public notice provided and Council consideration of issuance of the DVP (July 10, 2023);
3. Consideration of issuance of a second minor DVP by the Director of Climate Action, Planning, and Development;
4. Consideration of DP application and issuance by the Director of Climate Action, Planning, and Development.

Consultation

Per the Council resolution on July 12, 2021 the development review process for DVPs no longer requires an Opportunity to be Heard. However, notices would be sent to surrounding residents by the Legislative Services Department to provide an opportunity for written feedback.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

This report was written with input from the Engineering Department.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Staff do not anticipate any financial impacts, as no paid City parking would be impacted by the DVP.

OPTIONS

The following options are provided for Council's consideration:

1. That Council provide notice that it will consider issuance of a Development Variance Permit (DVP00696) to reduce the required off-street visitor parking by 43% and permit tandem parking for a mixed-use, multi-family development at 300 Duncan Street, 313 to 327 Blackley Street, and 326 to 340 Mercer Street.
2. That Council provide staff with alternative feedback.

Staff recommends Option 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Policy and Regulations Summary
Attachment 2: Analysis of Proposed Variances
Attachment 3: Applicant's Rationale Letter and Site Plan
Attachment 4: Project Statistics
Attachment 5: Draft Development Variance Permit DVP00696

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Wendee Lang, Development Planner

This report was reviewed by:
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Demian Rueter, Acting Senior Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development

This report was approved by:

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