

Fairfield Gonzales Community Association
1330 Fairfield Road
Victoria, BC V8S 5J1

October 22, 2018

PROPOSED PROJECT: 956 Heywood Avenue – Design Rationale

INTRODUCTION

Our proposed 7-unit building fronts onto Heywood Avenue, on the eastern edge of Beacon Hill Park. It looks towards the park's open meadow and the baseball diamonds at its north-east corner. The site's current zoning is R3AM-2, which permits four-storey multi-family developments. Currently this is the most common building massing on Heywood Avenue, typified by the particularly large four-storey apartment blocks that flank the subject site.

The current zoning assumes larger parcels, becoming problematic when it is applied to smaller parcels like the subject site. This site is a left-over from when the area had single family developments. Over the past decades apartment buildings literally built up and around it. In order to facilitate the development of a project which is suitable to the existing use and scale of this streetscape, we are seeking variances to the existing multi-family zoning. The proposed variances will permit us to achieve similar zoning parameters to other recent projects in the area, which dealt with similar circumstances. We've modelled our proposed building per the R-72 zoning of a recent project at 1014 Park Blvd., which did not have the existing multi-family zoning that 956 Heywood does. We've also considered the development currently under construction at 986 Heywood, which has a larger site, but is built to similar height and density.

DESIGN

The horizontal character of 956 Heywood, the predominantly wood facades and the use of screens relate to the linear and decorative qualities of the balconies on the neighbouring buildings. Combined with a flat roof and sympathetic massing, our proposed building will fit seamlessly into the existing streetscape. The use of screens on the facades will provide relief from hot west sun and will enliven the façade within the filigree of the linear overhangs.

The main floor has a wide street-facing common entry garden that accesses the elevator and an open staircase that serves each unit's exterior entry door. This creates a "vertical rowhouse" building shape, that encourages interaction between neighbours. This architectural feature will effectively create "doors on the street".

Units are oriented east-west allowing each one to have a strong relationship to the street and the park. Living areas are oriented to face the street, with quiet spaces deeper in the plan. The north and south sides of the building feature a long recess, to break up the mass of the building and provide an opportunity for larger openings and light. Operable screens will provide visual interest for occupants and the neighbouring apartments, while mitigating any loss of privacy between our proposed new building and its existing neighbours.

The plantings and entry garden on the proposal Heywood Avenue elevation will be inspired by the meadows of Beacon Hill Park.

ZONING

ZONING:

	R3-AM-2	R-72 (1014 PARK BLVD)	R3-AM-2 (986 HEYWOOD)	PROPOSED
FSR (4 STOREY)	1.2:1/ 1.6:1 (see below)	1.6:1 (908.8 SM/9,782.24	1.6:1 (2,334.85 SM/ 25,132.12 SF)	1.58: 1 (897.6 SM/ 9,662.0 SF)
BUILDING HEIGHT	39.37' (12.0 M)	39.70' (12.1 M)	46.85' (14.28 M)	46.59' (14.20M)
NO. STOREYS	4 STOREYS	4 STOREYS	4 STOREYS	4 STOREYS
SITE COVERAGE	30% (170.4 SM/ 1,834.17 SF) (MAIN BUILDING)	61% (346.48 SM/ 3,729.48 SF)	76% (1,108.22 SM/ 11,928.78 SF)	72.2% (4416.0 SF (410.26 SM) INCL. BALCONIES
OPEN SITE SPACE	N/A	32% (181.76 SM/ 1,956.45 SF)	17% (247.48 SM/ 2,663.85 SF)	+/- 16.4% (+/-1,000 SF/92.9 SM) +/- 35.3% (+/-2,160 SF/200.7 SM) INCL. PARKING ROOF GARDEN/PATIO
BONUS FOR ENCLOSED PARKING: - WHERE PARKING ENCLOSED & MIN 50% OF LOT IS OPEN SITE SPACE & DRIVE				+/- 39% +/-2,400 SF(223.05M) INCL. DRIVE & PARKING ROOF GARDEN/PATIO
FSR (4 STOREY)	1.6:1 (908.8 SM/9,782.24 SF)			
SITE COVERAGE (MAIN BUILDING)	40% (227.2 SM/ 2,445.56 SF)			

DENSITY

The proposed density and FSR will conform to the allowable density with bonus for a four-storey building in R3-AM-2 of 1.6:1/ 908.8 SM. Both 1014 Park Blvd. and 986 Heywood have FSR of 1.6:1, making it this the benchmark density for new development in the area.

By design, the proposal has no open parking. The proposed site coverage will be 72.2%, compared to 62% at 1014 Park Blvd. and 76% at 986 Heywood. Existing zoning allows 30% site coverage. The requested 40.2% of extra site coverage is a result of completely enclosing and hiding the proposed parking area. The roof of the parking garage will be landscaped at the rear and side yards, so it will qualify as open site space.

HEIGHT

Due to poor bearing capacity of underlying soils and the complexities of deep excavations on such a tight site, Geotechnical and Structural consultants have concluded that the maximum excavation depth should be limited to 2M. In order to avoid the underlying soft clays and accommodate covered and enclosed parking within these constraints, the building must be raised slightly. The proposal will seek a height variance of 2.20M, for a total building height of 14.20M; just lower than the 14.28 M height of 986 Heywood, down the street.

SETBACKS

SETBACKS:

	R3-AM-2	R-72 (1014 PARK BLVD)	R3-AM-2 (986 HEYWOOD)	PROPOSED
FRONT YARD (4 STOREY)	34.45' (10.5 M)	16.4' (5.0M)	12.34' (3.76M)/ 0.00' (0.0M) TO PARKING LEVEL	21.08' (6.43M)
FRONT BALCONY	27.89' (8.5M)	7.21' (2.2 M)	13.98' (4.26 M)	13.08' (3.99M)
REAR YARD	> OF 9.84' (3.0 M) OR ½ HEIGHT	18.7' (5.7M)<7M HT. 23.6' (7.2M)>7M HT.	23.43' (7.14M)/ 4.00' (1.22M) TO PARKING LEVEL	19.71' (6.01M)/ 4.0' (1.21M) TO PARKING LEVEL GARAGE
SIDE YARD	> OF 9.84' (3.0 M) OR ½ HEIGHT	NIL TO NON-HABITABLE ROOM 4.92' (1.5M) TO HABITABLE ROOM	NORTH: 17.91' (5.46M) TO HABITABLE/ 2.95' (0.90 M) TO NON-HABITABLE SOUTH: 8.07' (5.46 M) TO HABITABLE/ 1.87' (0.57 M) TO NON-HABITABLE	NORTH: 4.94' (1.51M) TO HABITABLE/ NON-HABITABLE SOUTH: 4.95' (1.51M) TO HABITABLE/ 1.94' (0.59M) TO NON-HABITABLE
SETBACK EXEMPTIONS	- STEPS & ENTRY CANOPIES 14.75' (4.5M) TO STREET OR 9.84' (3.0M) TO INT. PL - WHERE PL ABUTS STREET MAY BE AVG. USING FACES WITHIN 4.92' (1.5M) OF REQ'D. - NO SETBACK < 9.84' (3M) - BALCONY MAY PROJECT 6.56' (2M) - BALCONY MAY BE PARTIALLY OR TOTALLY ENCLOSED WHERE MATCHES CLADDING	- BALCONY OR DECK FACING STREET OR PARK MAY PROJECT INTO SETBACK 9.19' (2.8M)		

FRONT YARD

To be compatible with the neighbouring buildings, our proposed building has a front-yard setback 1.43M larger than allowable per R-72 zoning. A front-yard setback variance is requested, from 10.5M to 6.43M. Corner windows and balconies at the front façade will visually minimize the proposed building's massing. Similar to the neighbouring apartment buildings and the recent development at 1014 Park Blvd, proposed balconies will project into this setback.

Existing zoning allows for balconies to project 2.0M into the front yard setback. A variance is requested to allow this projection to increase to 2.5M, 0.3M less than the 2.8M permitted per R-72 zoning.

REAR YARD

The proposed rear-yard setback to the above grade storeys of the building is 0.3M more than the typical setback per R-72 zoning. While the basement level projects beyond this setback, it will be landscaped and treated as patios and open space, reducing its visual impact on any neighbours.

We are requesting a variance from existing zoning in order to permit the basement level to go within 1.21M of the rear property line, and for above grade levels (1-4) to be at 6.01M from the rear property line.

SIDE YARDS

The proposed side-yard setbacks are consistent with the 1.5M requirement per R-72 zoning. Additionally, an 8.23M x 1.0M recess will be carved out of the sides of each above grade floor, to further increase setback relief within the side-yards. R-72 zoning permits uninhabitable parking level to have 0.0M setbacks. The minimum proposed setback to the parking level is 0.6M at the south side, to allow for a significant landscape buffer.

We seek to vary the existing zoning to allow for the setbacks noted above.

PARKING

PARKING:				
	R3-AM-2	R-72 (1014 PARK BLVD)	R3-AM-2 (886 HEYWOOD)	PROPOSED
NO. UNITS	-	-	21 UNITS	7 UNITS
PARKING	1.4/UNIT	0.9/UNIT (6 SPACES)	29 STALLS (1.4/UNIT)	7 SPACES (1/UNIT)
VISITOR PARKING				
BIKE PARKING				
- LONG TERM	1.25/UNIT (6)	1.25/UNIT (6)	22 (12 NON-CONFORMING)	CONFORM TO CURRENT SCHEDULE 'C'
- SHORT TERM	6 SPACES	6 SPACES	6 SPACES	

A 1:1 ratio will be provided for vehicle parking. This exceeds the required 0.9 parking spaces / unit per R-72 zoning, and is nominally less than the revised Schedule-C requirements. This site is centrally located and close to public transportation and bike routes. The proposed development will provide ample secure long-term bike storage in the parking level.

SUMMARY

The proposed building suits the targeted use and character of the current zoning. It will quietly nestle itself into Heywood Avenue's streetscape. Planning's support for our requested variances will allow for the current zoning's intended uses to continue on, while providing the opportunity for a fresh development that supports empty nesters or young families. The site is perfectly situated to accommodate this modest project near Victoria's historic and important downtown, across from the much-loved Beacon Hill Park

Sincerely,

Aryze Development
Purdey Group
D'Arcy Jones Architecture