

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: September 1, 2021

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Deanna Wasnik, Acting Director of Planning and Development Services

SUBJECT: Development Permit with Variance Application No. DP100787

Applicant: The Hub Collection for 1268628 B.C. Ltd., Inc. No. BC1268628
Location: 4500 Ospika Boulevard

ATTACHMENT(S): Location and Existing Zoning Map
Development Permit with Variance No. DP100787
Exhibit "A" to DP100787
Exhibit "B" to DP100787
Exhibit "C" to DP100787
Supporting Documents

- Fire Hazard and Abatement Assessment prepared by TDB Consultants Ltd. dated April 9, 2021
- Rationale Letter from the Applicant
- Application History from the Applicant

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council APPROVES Multiple Residential Form and Character, and Wildfire Hazard Development Permit with Variance No. DP100787 for the property legally described as Lot 147, District Lot 2003, Cariboo District, Plan 28774 as follows:

- a. The development of one (1) apartment, as shown on Exhibit "A" to DP100787;
- b. Vary "City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007" Section 10.13.5 3. by increasing the maximum height from 15.0 m to 16.6 m, as shown on Exhibit "B" to DP100787;
- c. Vary "City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007" Section 10.13.5 4. by increasing the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5), as shown on Exhibit "B" to DP100787; and
- d. Vary "City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007" Table 7-4 by decreasing the required parking from 1.0 space per studio dwelling to 0.72 spaces per studio dwelling, as shown on Exhibit "C" to DP100787.

PURPOSE:

During its August 30th meeting, Council postponed the decision of Development Variance Permit No. VP100591 to the September 20, 2021 regular Council meeting and requested additional and relevant information regarding the proposed parking and massing of the student housing structure intended for the subject property.

In order to achieve the request of Council, Administration has provided the full scope of the project which includes Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit, Wildfire Hazard Development Permit, and the applicable variances. Development Permit with Variance Application No. DP100787 presented under this report, replaces Variance Permit No. VP100591. The variances proposed under Development Variance Permit No. VP100591 are included in Development Permit with Variance Application No. DP100787.

In review of the Development Permit drawings, Administration noted one further variance was needed to accommodate the proposed height of the structure; therefore, this report includes a recommendation to increase the height of the structure from 15.0 m to 16.6 m.

The applicant has applied for a Multiple Residential Form and Character, and Wildfire Hazard Development Permit to facilitate the construction of an apartment on the subject property located at 4500 Ospika Boulevard. The proposed apartment will be comprised of 256 studio dwelling units intended for student housing offering amenity space, onsite parking and landscaping. The apartment will be finished with a mix of materials including glass, corrugated metal and cement paneling. The proposed building footprint and varied roofline is intended to break up potential massing and add visual interest, as shown on Exhibit "A" to DP100787.

The applicant has also applied to vary the RM5: Multiple Residential regulations to increase the maximum height for the proposed apartment from 15.0 m to 16.6 m, increase the maximum storeys from four (4) to (5), and to decrease the required parking spaces from 1.0 to 0.72 spaces per studio dwelling, as shown on Exhibits "B" and "C" to DP100787, respectively.

Background

Site Characteristics

Location	4500 Ospika Boulevard
Current Use	Vacant Land
Property Size	2.2 ha (5.6 acres)
Zoning	RM5: Multiple Residential

Official Community Plan

Future Land Use	Neighbourhood Centre, Corridor
Growth Management	Infill

Surrounding Land Use Table

North	Ospika Boulevard
South	Tyner Boulevard; Undeveloped Land
East	Residential; Sullivan Crescent
West	Ospika Boulevard; Undeveloped Land

Relevant Applications

Official Community Plan Amendment Application No. CP100164 (Bylaw No. 9156) and Rezoning Amendment Application No. RZ100678 (Bylaw No. 9157):

On March 8, 2021, Council approved Bylaw No. 9156 and Bylaw No. 9157 for First and Second Reading to amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) from Neighbourhood Residential to Neighbourhood Centre, Corridor and rezone the subject property from RM1: Multiple Residential to RM5: Multiple Residential.

On May 31, 2021, the Public Hearing was held for Bylaw No. 9156 and Bylaw No. 9157 and Council approved both bylaws for Third Reading. Prior to the Public Hearing, a Traffic Impact Study and Serving Brief were provided to the satisfaction of Administration. The applicant also provided a document titled *Prince George, BC: Stakeholder Presentation April 2021* which was included in the Council agenda package. The applicant presented the housing project details in regards to building siting and design.

On August 16, 2021, Council adopted Bylaw No. 9156 and Bylaw No. 9157. Prior to Final Reading and adoption, a Section 219 No Build Covenant was registered on title to ensure that no building or development occurs until all geotechnical concerns have been addressed to the satisfaction of Administration.

Development Variance Permit No. VP100591:

On August 30, 2021, Council considered varying the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) and decreasing the number of required parking spaces. Council postponed consideration until the next regularly scheduled meeting when additional background information and rationale will be presented. The professional reporting (Traffic Impact Study, Servicing Brief and Geotechnical Assessment) received to the satisfaction of Administration during the OCP Amendment and Rezoning application has not been included as supporting documents as directed by the applicant. Rather, the applicant has provided the attached application history.

POLICY/REGULATORY ANALYSIS:

The *Local Government Act* allows municipalities to designate development permit areas for the purposes outlined in Section 488 of the Act. Once a development permit area has been designated, a development permit must be obtained prior to development occurring on-site.

Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 8383, 2011

The OCP requires that all lands identified within a Development Permit Area be required to adhere to the Development Permit Area guidelines provided within the City's Zoning Bylaw. The OCP requires that all land, on which zoning or comprehensive strata developments allow multiple residential development, must be consistent with the Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Guidelines. The subject property has also been identified within Schedule D-3: Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area and must be consistent with the Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Guidelines.

Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Area

The Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Area is intended to diversify housing stock options while providing for an appropriate level of design and site layout, compatible with and complimentary to adjacent uses, and considers the human-scale.

The proposed development is consistent with the Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Guidelines as it will diversify the surrounding housing stock. The proposed development has a modulating design with respect to adjacent residential uses. The apartment building will step down from five (5) to four (4) storeys as the building transitions closer to the residential neighbourhood on Sullivan Crescent to reduce potential massing. The building will be finished with a variety of materials including glass, corrugated metal and cement paneling. The site layout offers a setback greater than 20.0 m, ample landscaping, and screening between off-street parking and the adjacent public sidewalk along Ospika Boulevard. Further to this, the applicant will protect natural environmental features such as the drainage channel and vegetation adjacent to Tyner Boulevard.

The Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Guidelines have been met to the satisfaction of Administration.

Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area

The subject property is entirely within the Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area. The Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area is intended to protect development from wildfire hazards. The Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Guidelines indicate that proposed development must address the interface wildfire risk through the removal of forest fuel and the use of appropriate building materials as defined in the BC Home Owners FireSmart Manual.

The applicant has provided a Fire Hazard and Abatement Assessment prepared by TDB Consulting Ltd. dated April 9, 2021, to the satisfaction of Administration and attached as a supporting document.

Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007

The subject property is zoned RM5: Multiple Residential. The purpose of the RM5 zone is to provide multiple residential housing forms with a maximum density of 125 dwellings/ha for areas defined by the OCP as suitable for higher density housing. The applicant has applied for two (2) variances to the RM5 zone and one (1) variance to the parking regulations in order to accommodate the proposed development on the subject property.

Height

The RM5 principal development regulations permits a maximum height of 15.0 m and a maximum number of four (4) storeys. The applicant has applied to vary the development regulations to increase the maximum height from 15.0 m to 16.6 m, and to increase the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5), as shown on Exhibit "B" to DP100787.

The subject property has been identified as having challenging topography that includes slopes with grades greater than 20%. The applicant has provided a site plan with elevations showing the considerable elevation changes across the subject property, included in Exhibit "A" to DP100787. The applicant is proposing to construct the apartment fronting Ospika Boulevard where the grade drops approximately 1.6 m. As such, the applicant is proposing to increase the maximum height from 15.0 m to 16.6 m, and to increase the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) for approximately 60% of the proposed development, as shown on Exhibit "B" to DP100787. Considering the elevation change between Ospika Boulevard and the proposed development, the apartment will be constructed in a depression and may appear to meet the four (4) storey and 15.0 m maximum height regulations.

The applicant has designed the site with consideration to potential impacts on adjacent residential uses. The applicant has proposed to reduce potential massing by stepping down the building to four (4) storeys (approximately 13.5 m in height), as the building transitions closer to the residential neighbourhood on Sullivan Crescent. This will minimize the potential overshadowing on adjacent properties.

Administration supports the height variance for the following reasons:

- Due to the topography of the subject property, the proposed apartment building would appear to meet the maximum height and storey regulations;
- The applicant has proposed to step down the apartment from 16.6 m to approximately 13.5 m in height as the building transitions closer to the residential neighbourhood on Sullivan Crescent;
- The proposed development will meet all other RM5 zoning regulations including site coverage; front, rear and side yard setbacks; and landscaping requirements;
- Adjacent properties will be buffered by landscaping; and
- The proposed development is consistent with the Multiple Residential Form and Character Development Permit Guidelines.

Parking

As per Table 7-4 of the Zoning Bylaw an apartment use requires 1.0 parking space per studio dwelling and an additional 1.0 parking space per 7 dwellings designated as visitor parking. The applicant has applied to decrease the required parking on the subject property from 1.0 space per studio dwelling (256 spaces) to 0.72 spaces per studio dwelling (184 spaces), as shown on Exhibit "C" to DP100787. The applicant has proposed underground vehicle parking with 125 spaces and 95 spaces of surface parking for a total of 220 parking spaces to accommodate residents and visitor parking. Parking is proposed to be accessed from Ospika Boulevard.

The applicant has provided a rationale letter prepared by Stephane Laroye Architect Inc. dated August 3, 2021, attached as a supporting document. The rationale letter indicates that the proposed parking variance is consistent with similar student housing projects in the province.

Further to this, the subject property is adjacent to transit services, sidewalk infrastructure, and pedestrian connectivity to support safe and accessible access to public transit. Public transit services provide connections to nearby amenities, the University of Northern British Columbia and College of New Caledonia at regular intervals.

Administration supports the proposed parking variance based on the proximity to pedestrian connectivity, transit services and the rationale outlined above.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Council Procedures during COVID-19

Orders of the Provincial Health Officer and Ministerial Order No. 192, issued under the *Emergency Program Act*, related to local government meetings and bylaw processes, have imposed specific requirements on local governments related to council meetings and bylaw process. In accordance with these orders, City Council has discontinued informal hearings for Development Variance Permit applications, Temporary Use Permit applications and other applications where such hearings are not legally required to be held. This decision is effective for the period that the Ministerial Orders related to local government meetings and bylaw processes apply.

As per the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act* and "City of Prince George Development Procedures Bylaw No. 7635, 2005", the City of Prince George will mail or otherwise deliver a public notice to property owners and tenants whose interests may be affected by this application. Written submissions received in response to the public notice for this application will be provided to Council for their consideration at the time the application and granting of the permit is being considered. Submissions received after the Council meeting agenda has been published will be provided to Council as a handout on the day of the Council meeting for consideration during deliberations on the application.

Referrals

This application was referred to internal City divisions and external agencies with no outstanding concerns.

Notification to Adjacent Property Owners

As per the requirements set out in the *Local Government Act*, the City of Prince George will mail or otherwise deliver a notice to adjacent property owners and tenants whose interests may be affected by this Development Permit with Variance application.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the permit
2. Approve the permit as amended
3. Refuse the permit
4. Defer or otherwise deal with the permit

Administration recommends that Development Permit with Variance No. DP100787 be approved.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Administration recommends that Council approve the applicant's Multiple Residential Form and Character, and Wildfire Hazard Development Permit with variances to increase the maximum height, maximum number of storeys and decrease the required parking for the proposed development for the reasons outlined in this report.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Deanna Wasnik, Acting Director of Planning and Development Services

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2021/09/20