

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: August 6, 2021

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

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

SUBJECT: Development Variance Permit No. VP100591

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

ATTACHMENT(S): Location and Existing Zoning Map
Development Variance Permit No. VP100591
Exhibit "A" to VP100591
Exhibit "B" to VP100591
Rationale Letter for Variances
Supporting Documents

- Site Plan
- Visual Renderings
- Shadow Study
- Landscaping Plan

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council APPROVES Development Variance Permit No. VP100591 to vary City of Prince George Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007 for the property legally described Lot 147, District Lot 2003, Cariboo District, Plan 28774, as follows:

- Vary Section 10.13.5 4. by increasing the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) storeys, as shown on Exhibit "A" to VP100591.
- Vary Table 7-4 by decreasing the total required parking spaces from 1.0 stall per studio dwelling to 0.63 stalls per studio dwelling as shown on Exhibit "B" to VP100591.

PURPOSE:

The applicant has applied to vary the RM5: Multiple Residential regulations to increase the number of storeys for the proposed apartment from 4 to 5 storeys for a portion of the proposed 256 unit apartment building as shown on Exhibit "A" to VP100591. In addition, the applicant has also applied to decrease the required parking for housing, apartment from 1.0 stall per studio dwelling to 0.63 stalls per studio dwelling as shown on Exhibit "B" to VP100591. The purpose of the application is to facilitate the development of one (1) 256 unit apartment building at 4500 Ospika Boulevard (subject property).

Background

Site Characteristics

Location	4500 Ospika Boulevard
Current Use	Undeveloped multiple residential land
Site Area	2.2 ha (5.64 acres)
Zoning	RM5: Multiple Residential

Official Community Plan

Future Land Use	Neighbourhood Centre, Corridor
Growth Management	Infill

Surrounding Land Use Table

North	Ospika Boulevard and residential uses
South	Tyner Boulevard
East	Residential uses and Sullivan Crescent
West	Ospika Boulevard and undeveloped land

Relevant Applications

Official Community Plan Amendment and Rezoning Application No. CP100164 and RZ100678 (Bylaw No. 9156 and 9157): The applicant applied for an Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment to amend the subject property from Neighborhood Residential to Neighbourhood Centre Corridor and rezone the subject property from RM1: Multiple Residential to RM5: Multiple Residential to facilitate the development of a 256 unit apartment for student housing apartments. Final Reading for Bylaw No. 9156 and 9157, 2020 was granted by Council on August 16, 2021.

Multiple Residential Development Permit No. DP100787: The applicant has applied for a Multiple Residential Development Permit Form and Character Development Permit for the proposed 256-unit student housing apartment building. The application is on hold pending consideration of Development Variance Permit No. VP100591 by Mayor and Council.

POLICY / REGULATORY ANALYSIS:

Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007

The subject property is zoned RM5: Multiple Residential. The purpose of the zone is to provide for multiple housing with a maximum residential density of 125 dwellings/ha for areas defined by the OCP as suitable for higher density housing. The proposed RM5 zone permits a maximum height of 15 m and a maximum number of four (4) storeys for the principal development.

While the proposed building height meets the zoning regulations, the following variances are needed to facilitate the construction of the proposed 256-unit apartment building:

1. Increase the number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) storeys for a portion of the proposed building; and,
2. Decrease the number of required parking stalls from 1.0 stall per studio dwelling to 0.63 stalls per studio dwelling.

Variance to number of Storeys (Section 10.13.5 4.)

The applicant has applied to vary the number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) storeys for a portion (approximately 60%) of the proposed 256 Unit apartment building to facilitate an additional 30 dwelling units and an all-purpose amenity area, as shown on the Exhibit "A" to VP100591. In reviewing a Development Variance Permit application, administration takes into consideration, site characteristics, site design, landscaping and other buffering mechanisms to mitigate impacts to adjacent uses.

Site Characteristics

The subject property has a significant topographic elevation change of approximately 23.0 m (695 m- 672m) from Ospika Boulevard to the most southern portion of the property at Tyner Boulevard. Due to the topographic challenges of the site, the applicant is proposing to construct the apartment building adjacent to Ospika Boulevard with an underground parkade. The first storey of the proposed building will be constructed into the natural embankment and utilize the natural contours of the property, as shown on Exhibit "A" to VP100591.

Site Design

As indicated previously, a portion of the apartment building is proposed to be five (5) storeys. This portion of the building is bounded by Tyner and Ospika Boulevard and is the furthest portion away from residential uses. The applicant is reducing the massing impacts by stepping down the building to four (4) storeys as the building transitions closer to the Sullivan Crescent residential neighbourhood. The applicant has provided visual renderings showing the development from Ospika Boulevard, Tyner Boulevard and Sullivan Crescent which are attached in the supporting documents.

The applicant has also provided a shadow study of the proposed apartment building to provide information on massing in relation to the adjacent residential neighbourhood and road network (Tyner and Ospika Boulevard) on March 21, September 21 and June 21. The shadow study indicates the greatest magnitude of shadowing to the adjacent residential neighbourhood of Sullivan Crescent will be March 21 and September 21 with partial shadowing of the rear yards.

Landscape Buffers

In order to mitigate the impacts from the development such as noise and light onto adjacent residential properties to the north and east of the development, the applicant is proposing to retain and plant a landscaping buffer. This buffer consists of coniferous and deciduous trees and understory vegetation. The applicant is also retaining a large portion of the existing tree and understory cover on the subject property to buffer the parking footprint as shown on the attached landscape plan in the supporting document package.

The applicant has designed the site to mitigate the impacts of the increase in the number of storeys to adjacent residential uses, by locating the five (5) storey portion of the building away from the residential neighbourhood and increasing the landscape buffering between the proposed development and residential neighbourhood. The proposed development will meet all other development regulations for site coverage, height and setbacks of the RM5 zone.

Administration is supportive of the proposed variance as per the rationale provided in this report.

Parking Variance (Table 7-4 of the Zoning Bylaw No. 7850, 2007)

The applicant has applied to reduce the number of parking spaces for apartment, housing within the RM5: Multiple Residential zone. As per Table 7-4 of the Zoning Bylaw a housing, apartment use requires 1.0 parking space per studio dwelling and an additional 1.0 parking stall per 7 dwellings designated as visitor parking. The applicant has proposed to decrease the required parking from 1.0 parking stall per studio dwelling to 0.63 parking stalls per studio dwelling, as shown on Exhibit "B" to VP100591. The applicant is providing 184 stalls for the studio dwellings and 36 visitor-parking stalls for a total of 220 parking stalls.

The applicant has provided a rationale letter prepared by a registered professional that identified the requested parking space reduction is consistent with similar student housing projects in the province for micro unit designs (Please see the attached rationale letter).

Further to the attached rationale letter, the subject property is within an established area with access to daily amenities, pedestrian connections, and transit services through BC Transit that connect to the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) and College of New Caledonia (CNC) at frequent intervals (30 minutes to 1 hour).

Administration is supportive of the proposed variance to decrease the required number of parking stalls as per the rationale provided 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 temporary use.

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 Variance Permit No. VP100591 be approved.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The applicant has applied for a variance permit to increase the maximum number of storeys from four (4) to five (5) as shown on Exhibit "A" to VP100591 and decreasing the required parking from 1.0 stall per studio dwelling to 0.63 stalls per studio dwelling as shown on Exhibit "B" to VP100591. Administration recommends that Council approves the application 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: 2021/08/30