



Development Design Rationale

June 16, 2021

Development Intent

MCYH Multigenerational Housing Society ("MCYH") is a charitable organization that operates below-market rate residential accommodation, support, and incidental facilities to seniors, families, and adult individuals who are poor, of low income, or in need in Canada.

Larco Investments is acting as owner's representative, agent and project manager for the design and development at 1317 Richards and 508 Drake St.

We are proposing to redevelop a site in Yaletown with a mixed-use podium and residential tower. The proposal seeks to replace the site's existing institutional use (Jamatkhana prayer hall and related facilities) and incorporate it into a new, mixed-use cultural, educational, and below-market rental and market (for seniors and the disabled) rental residential building in Vancouver's New Yaletown neighbourhood. It is the hope of MCYH that the Richards + Drake project will serve as a model to deliver housing for the poor, seniors and the disabled in urban areas around the globe.

Development Proposal

This application proposes to rezone the sites at 1317 Richards and 508 Drake Street from DD Downtown District to CD-1.

The proposal is to demolish the existing 2 storey building and develop the site with a 40 storey mixed-use building with an institutional, cultural, educational and community use podium below and 193 affordable rental housing units in the tower above.

The project is requesting the following relaxations:

cc:

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PROPOSED RELAXATIONS		
	Permitted / Required	Proposed
Maximum Density	5.0 FSR	13.81 FSR
	5,575 sq.m (60,009 sq.ft)	15,399.61 sq.m (165,760 sq.ft)
Maximum Height	36.6 m (120 ft)	125.21 m (411 ft)
Setbacks Above 21.34 m (70ft)		
Front, Exterior Side	3.66 m (12 ft)	1.83 m (6 ft)
Interior Side	12.19 m (40 ft)	9.75 m (32 ft)
Rear	9.14 m (30 ft)	3.05 m (10 ft)
Loading Class A	0	1
Loading Class B	2	1
Passenger Loading Class A	2	drop-off at Richards St.
Small Car provision	max. 25%	20 (38%)

Development Context

- The site is located at the corner of Richards and Drake Streets in the ‘New Yaletown’ neighbourhood on the downtown peninsula. There is currently a modest 2 storey institutional building with an Ismaili Jamatkhana (Prayer Hall), and adjacent surface parking lot on the site to the west.
- In recent years, the neighbourhood has been substantially transformed into a predominantly high-density, high-rise residential neighbourhood, with either townhouses or commercial and institutional uses located at street level. Surrounding buildings include:
 - 23 storey ‘Oscar’ residential tower with townhouses is located east across Drake St.
 - 32 storey ‘Grace Tower’ market condos at the opposite corner of Richards and Drake
 - 43 storey ‘Wall Financial’ rental residential tower located across Richards Street
 - 12 storey ‘Kindred Place’ non-market residential to the west



- 11 storey 'Karis Place' non-market residential across the lane
- 5 storey 'Covenant House' supportive housing building immediately across the lane
- Proposed dedicated bike paths are currently being constructed along both Drake Street and Richards Street that will provide easy bike access for both residents and visitors. Our proposed design illustrates this future streetscape.

Applicable Plans, Policies & Guidelines

The following plans, policies and guidelines have guided and informed the proposal:

- Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2012-2020)
- Housing Vancouver Strategy (2017)
- Downtown South Goals and Policies - In the Downtown South, Council endorses the development of new housing capacity in a high-density, livable, safe, and environmentally conscious community with ample transportation alternatives to the personal vehicle. Council also endorses the principle of developing new social housing, and additional density on small sites to accommodate it.
- Downtown Official Development Plan and Downtown South Guidelines - This document and accompanying drawing package depict how the proposal meets the ODP and Guidelines.
- Council Policy Report "Potential 'Benefit Capacity' in Downtown" (October 14, 2008) - Based on an assessment of the available capacity to accommodate additional floor space in downtown to support public benefits, Council endorsed consideration of site-specific rezonings in the Downtown South up to the height limits imposed by the approved view corridors, subject to full rezoning processing and Public Hearing.
- Green Building Policy for Rezoning – This project will meet the requirements of the Green Building Policy for Rezoning. Our sustainability consultant Morrison Hershfield has provided an Energy Modeling Report. We are pursuing Path B: Low Emissions Green Buildings.



- View Protection Guidelines – We have worked with City Planning staff to determine the impact of view cones on our site and that information is included in our Development Permit drawing package.
- Family Room: Housing Mix Policy for Rezoning Projects - The residential component of this proposal will meet or exceed the Family Room Housing Mix Policy by providing the requisite number of family-sized units.
- Citywide Integrated Rainwater Management Plan – A Rainwater Management Plan has been provided by R.F. Binnie + Associated Ltd. In addition to the green roofs, strategies proposed include absorbent landscaping, a rainwater detention tank and flow control devise, and mechanical treatment to limit the development’s impact on the City’s storm system.
- Parking By-Law – It is the intent to meet the Parking By-law. Given the charitable, not-for-profit nature of this project, any variances in Parking being requested are with the supporting documentation of a Traffic Impact and Parking Analysis, prepared by Bunt and Associates Engineering Ltd.

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Public Benefits

The project offers several public benefits to the City of Vancouver, not the least of which is the development of a unique model for charitable mixed-use housing and community-serving projects in urban areas. In addition, the project provides:

- Below-market rental housing and rental housing for the poor, seniors and the disabled
- 100% of the 193 units are secured social rental housing units:
 - 89– Studio Units
 - 84 – One Bedroom Units
 - 10 – Two Bedroom Units
 - 10 – Three Bedroom Units
- Urban mixed-use project including community hub, where people can convene in a number of ways including socializing, learning, praying, living and supporting each other.
- Multiple community-serving spaces in the podium, include:



- Social Room / Multi-purpose space – a large, over height space with adjoining linear garden with servery and storage spaces, makes an ideal location for receptions, sporting, or community gatherings;
- Early Childhood play space – with adjacent outdoor play space;
- Learning Spaces – with lounge, classroom and boardroom spaces;
- Enhanced public realm along Richards and Drake frontage with benches, lighting and extensive landscaping
- Indoor and outdoor amenity areas for the enjoyment of residents include indoor kitchen, lounge and fitness spaces adjacent to outdoor children’s play space, urban agriculture plots and gathering spaces.
- The development of the site does not displace any existing residents

Urban Design Analysis

Building Setbacks

The relatively compact site is impacted by a variety of setbacks as follows:

- **Richards St. and Drake St.:**
 - 12ft building setback from the property lines.
 - Proposal is to retain this setback at the lower 5 podium levels (approximate 70ft height above sidewalk) to allow for a generous public realm with landscaping consistent with surrounding developments; and project the upper tower 6ft towards the property lines along Richards and Drake streets.
 - Provides minimum 80ft separation from existing towers across Richards and Drake
- **Rear yard (lane):**
 - No setback is required below 70ft on this corner site; however, above this height a 30ft (9.14m) setback is requested.



- Proposal is for the upper podium (levels 6-10) to be setback 10ft (3m) from the rear property line; resulting in the lower podium being a similar scale to the adjacent Covenant House across the lane.
- Interior Side yard:
 - No setback is required below the 70ft height. Above 70ft height a minimum 40ft (12.2m) setback is requested. The proposal provides a 32ft (9.75m) setback.
 - The residential tower is further setback to fully respect the view cone from False Creek.
 - More than 40ft remains between the neighbouring buildings' curved facade to the west, and the proposed tower.

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Building Height and View Cones

Maximum building height is determined by the Zoning and Development Bylaw, Official Development Plan, and the City-adopted view cones - whichever is more restrictive. The City calculated and tested the view cone across the site (See Figure 2). View cone B1 from the south side of False Creek is the most restrictive and therefore limits the podium height as well as the placement and form of the residential tower on the site. The proposed tower height of 41 storeys (incl. roof garden access level) including elevator overrun and required mechanical space is below View Cone 3 height of 139.7m geodetic elevation. Refer to DP drawings.

Design Response: Form and Massing

- The overall podium and tower massing is strongly influenced by the view cone constraints as well as the surrounding urban context.
- The footprint of the slender tower is approximately 3800sf while typical towers in this neighbourhood downtown are significantly larger at around 6500sf.
- A 12ft setback on Richards and Drake at the lower podium provides ample over-height space for a double row of trees, landscaping, entry staircase and plazas. Above 70ft, the building form cantilevers out 6ft towards the property line further defining the sense of entry for both the residential lobby on Drake, and the Prayer Hall entry lobby on Richards.



- View cone impact on form: The proposal illustrates a dynamic triangular tower form that respects the view cone from the south side of False Creek, with the exception of balconies that project a maximum of 2ft into the view cone to enhance livability.
- A series of cantilevered triangular balconies at the south and north corners with feature decorative geometric screens further break down the tower massing. In addition, rectangular balconies and screen at the corner of Richards and Drake extends up the height of the tower.
- Stepping of the podium massing allow for a series of rooftops that will be used as landscape gardens, play spaces and resident gathering spaces.
- Strategies to minimize the impacts on neighbouring buildings include:
 - Sloping and terracing of the podium edge along the west property line provides for access to daylight, landscaped planters and decorative geometric screens for privacy;
 - Extensive landscaping within the setbacks along Richards and Drake Streets for an enhanced public realm;
 - Decorative geometric screens are located at the tower balconies to minimize overview as well provide a unique architectural feature;
 - Majority of residential tower unit windows are oriented towards the more public Richards and Drake Streets;
 - All rooftops to have extensive landscaping in order to provide a visual amenity for surrounding neighbours.

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Architectural Design Rationale: Program

- The project is divided into two main programmatic components, the **podium** with institutional, cultural and social spaces occupying levels 1-5 and the rental **residential tower** from levels 6-40.

Podium:

- Level 1 Entry Lobby:



- One arrives from Richards Street up a terraced feature stair or shallow ramp to the entry vestibule.
- A small internal café with seating area enhances the main lobby and serves as an inviting gathering space.
- A sculptural feature staircase surrounded by glass guardrails connects the main level lobby with the upper level spaces.
- Level 2 Worship / Multi-purpose space: Upon arriving at level 2 users proceed through a series of thresholds with increasingly taller and larger interior spaces of increasing privacy.
- Level 3: Reading Rooms
- Level 4 Social Room: Upon arriving at level 4, past the reading room and classroom/meeting room, one arrives at a social gathering space overlooking Richards street. This gathering space leads to the main Social Hall suitable for gatherings and indoor sports.
- Level 5 Library / Learning + Early Childhood Play Space: Stair and elevator access lead to an interior childcare space that opens up to a west-facing outdoor rooftop play space. The learning area with classrooms and meeting space also have access to a southwest facing podium garden space from the upper lobby.

Tower (levels 6-40):

- The main entry and lobby is located off Drake Street.
- A bike elevator next to the lobby provides direct access to below grade bike storage.
- The residential tower includes rental suites of varying sizes, namely efficient Studios, 1 bedroom units, and family-oriented 2 and 3 bedroom units.
- Units have either small balconies or Juliet balconies.
- A family lounge and a fitness facility open onto a residential garden and terrace space with BBQ and outdoor play space on level 11. All of these spaces are for the enjoyment of all residents.



- A communal tower rooftop space is also available and dedicated to residents in the building and includes outdoor gardens in addition to outdoor seating areas

Colours and Materials and Character

- A unique contemporary character is being proposed through the use of colour and high-quality materials and finishes on the podium and the tower.
- Large format 'stone' slab limestone coloured porcelain cladding at the podium core walls and stair towers contrast and frame large expanses of feature glass at both the residential and cultural lobbies.
- Small window openings in a distinct staggered pattern are located on the exterior walls of the exit stairs facing Drake Street. While this provides a unique architectural feature on the façade that glows at night, it also enhances the user experience.
- Laser cut geometric metal screens at residential balconies provide layering and depth to the façade. They also provide a degree of privacy. Additional larger scale screens at the south side of the podium, levels 2 and 3 provide both sun shading and a degree of privacy for these more public spaces.
- A combination of clear, fritted and spandrel glass are used extensively on the tower to emphasize its visual lightness, with vertical bands of metal panel cladding accentuating the towers thinness on the skyline.