

## STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

### DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP001245 – 223 & 225 NICOL STREET

**Applicant & Architect:** RAYMOND DE BEELD ARCHITECT INC.

**Owner:** GURSHINDER SANDHU SINGH

**Landscape Architect:** KINSHIP DESIGN

**Subject Property and Site Context:**

<i>Zoning</i>	DT12 – Gateway
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the east side of Nicol Street, in between Milton Street and Farquhar Street
<i>Total Area</i>	773m <sup>2</sup>
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Neighbourhood; Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 9 - Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family, and Mixed Commercial/Residential development.
<i>Neighbourhood Plan</i>	South End Neighbourhood Plan
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines, and South End Neighbourhood Plan Urban Design Framework and Guidelines

The subject property is located within the South End neighbourhood, south of the downtown area. Established single family homes, commercial and institutional properties, and Deverill Square Park predominantly characterize the surrounding area. The property has a slope of approximately 3m from the high side on Nicol Street to the low side at the rear of the property. There is a lane at the rear which is the main access to the property.

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant proposes to construct a ten unit affordable market rental development, including four live/work units. The proposed development consists of a four-storey building with under-the-building parking. The building is proposed to cover 42% of the lot with a total gross floor area (GFA) of approximately 866m<sup>2</sup>. The DT12 zone allows for a base floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.00 plus 0.25 for mixed-use buildings and an additional 0.25 if the development can achieve Tier 1 through Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw for a total FAR of 1.50. The applicant is proposing a maximum FAR of 1.50.

#### Site Design

The proposed live/work units are located on the main floor, with two of the main doors facing Nicol Street. The remaining two live/work units are accessed from each side of the building by a pedestrian walkway around the perimeter of the main level (accessed from Nicol Street). Under-the-building parking with 17 stalls will be accessed from the lane at the rear. Pedestrian access from the parking area is provided by an elevator and stairs located on the south side of the property, to the rear. Long-term bike storage and electric vehicle/bicycle charging stations are located within the under-the-building parking area along with an enclosed refuse and recycling area.

Staff Comments:

- Consider additional wayfinding elements on the site to direct visitors to each live/work entrance.
- Ensure there is adequate space for refuse, recycling and organics containers.

Building Design:

The proposed building is four-storeys with a maximum height of approximately 14m and under-the-building parking. The building presents as four storeys on Nicol Street with the top two storeys set back, defining the lower floors. The grade change of the site allows under the-building parking which is open to the lane at the rear.

The unit composition consists of one and two bedroom units, approximately 137m<sup>2</sup>–287m<sup>2</sup> in floor area and four live/work units approximately 30m<sup>2</sup> in floor area. The building has a flat roof, with an open deck on the front façade, over the first two storeys. The units on the top two storeys have access to covered balconies with glass railings. Finishing materials include corrugated cladding, wood grain Hardie panel, fibre cement panels, and concrete.

Staff comments:

- Consider additional material changes on the north and south sides to break up the vertical massing and better define the base of the building in accordance with the South End Neighbourhood design guidelines.
- Consider more prominent entries to the work/live units, especially on the sides.
- Ensure adequate screening of any rooftop mechanical equipment.

Landscape Design

The proposed landscape plan consists of a landscape buffer along Nicol Street, vertical green screens in the parking area, concrete planters, and pedestrian walkways. On the main level (accessed from Nicol Street), the concrete planters incorporate seating opportunities and are placed around the building, planted with a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs. Outdoor patios are provided for the live/work units facing the lane, surrounded by concrete planters. Two pedestrian entrances are located along the front property line on Nicol Street. Concrete pavers complete the pedestrian walkway, with a pattern change for the walkways leading to the live/work entrances facing the street.

A short-term bike parking rack is located at the front of the building and recessed lighting is used throughout the site along the concrete planters. The open deck above the second storey will have steel planting boxes which will be planted with a mix of flowers and grasses. A black picket fence and railing will be provided on top of the under-the-building parking area.

Staff Comments:

- Ensure adequate lighting is provided to illuminate the unit addresses, pedestrian entrances, and for general site visibility within the parking garage.
- Incorporate solid screening of ceiling lights used in the parking garage to mitigate any off-site illumination.
- Increase the width of the landscape buffer along Nicol Street to improve the pedestrian experience.

## **PROPOSED VARIANCES**

### *Landscape Buffer*

The minimum required landscape buffer is 1.8m along the front property line in order to screen the street. The proposed landscape buffer along the front property line does not appear to meet the minimum 1.8m width, therefore a variance is required.