

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Development Variance Permit Application
517 Marine Drive
March 15th, 2021

The object of this application is to request the relaxation of maximum gross floor area and setbacks set forth in Bylaw 1065 for a property in the R3 zone that is also governed by:

*Sub-Area E View Protection and Massing <Bylaw 1065 - Section 507>
Multi-Family Residential Special Character <OCP Part E - Figure 5-2>*

The proposed development consists of a two-family residential dwelling (duplex) with two secondary suites. The initial inspiration for this configuration was based on initial queries made to the planning department that confirmed this would be feasible because zoning amendments were likely to be made in the near future to allow secondary suites in more housing types. The figure below confirms the desirability of this configuration of multi-family dwelling within a unified principal building.



Given that the property at 517 Marine Drive is of a compact size (511 m²) and in order to yield four dwelling units of adequate areas and with a satisfactory degree of privacy among them, the architectural design has evolved after an exhaustive assessment of alternatives. We believe the proposed design is balanced in that it strictly adheres to the most important restrictions (building height, lot coverage, vehicle parking) and confers a visually attractive solution that offers an improved streetscape to this special area of Gibsons.

In addition to the aesthetic appeal, the proposed layout adapts well to the natural grade that slopes up sharply from Marine Drive up to McCall Lane. By pulling the lower volume of the building forward and downward, less excavation will be required in this sensitive area of the municipality (aquifer); the upper volume gently terraces back to

accommodate generous cross views from neighboring properties. In other words, the farther forward and lower the building is on the lot, the less obstructive it is to neighboring views. The other advantage of this is to delegate all of the parking stalls to the rear of the lot and avoiding another unseemly driveway along Marine Drive, as well as less danger for pedestrians/cyclists and no loss of valuable public parking stalls on the street in front of the property.

We acknowledge that the reduced front setback we are requesting is substantial, although we firmly believe it could be deemed as responding to the urban fabric in the immediate environs. This is a highly specific place in the town given that it is a main artery that acts as the gateway to the urban center of Gibsons Landing. Just north of Beach Avenue along Marine Drive, all of the homes down to the municipal boundary have very small front setbacks despite being in the same R3 designation. To the south, there is an abrupt transition to a commercial zone with zero front setbacks. And across the street CDA-1 is a high density cluster development with little or no setback requirements from the front of property line. In this sense, the reduced front setback we pursue is not out of context. In fact, it could be considered a positive precedent for a friendlier and more urbane streetfront to be enjoyed by the many pedestrians and cyclists who follow this route every day.

Specifically, the relaxation that is being requested is as follows:

- 1) 500(1)(a) For lots <559 m², maximum gross floor area=232 m².
Proposed: 450 m²
- 2) 500(1)(b) Min. side yard: 1.5 m. Sum of side yards: 4.5 m.
Proposed Side Setbacks: 1.5 m.
- 3) 927(1) Front Setback: 7.5 m.
Proposed Front Setback: 1.0 m.

Please refer to the graphic plans for details. It is important to note that all other restrictions are met:

507(1) Maximum Height of 10.0 m measured from average natural grade of property line at Marine Drive.

507(2) Rear Setback > 6.0 m

612 Two parking spaces per dwelling unit

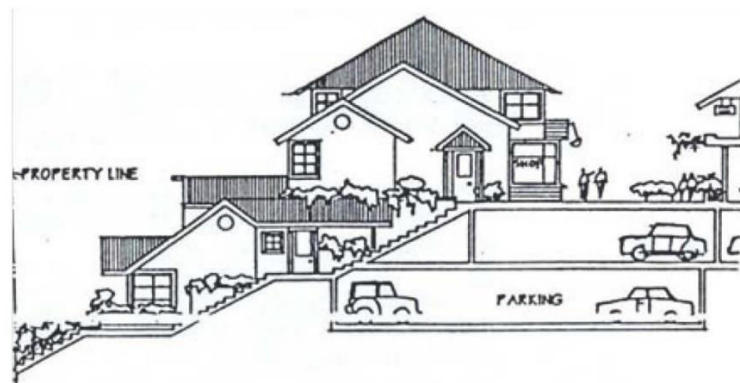
938 Maximum Lot Coverage <50%

Perhaps more importantly, we consider the characteristics of our design proposal to be coherent with the goals set forth in the Smart Plan, in particular regarding infill, sustainable growth and the pressing need for affordable rental units. The property under study is in the Multi-Family Residential Special Character zone, which is intended to maintain the single detached residential character in the Landing while at the same time providing the *added density desired near the adjacent commercial area.*

Specifically for Heritage Hill, section 9.1.2 in the Smart Plan indicates: “Due to the views and proximity to Gibsons Landing, the Plan anticipates some demand for redevelopment and low density multi-unit housing... New single-detached houses and multiple family units are encouraged to fit with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Small pocket park(s) may be provided on unused road allowances to provide neighborhood open space.”

In Section 16.6 of the Smart Plan, form and character is addressed as follows: “All built form in the Harbor Area, particularly where it fronts on the “Village Walk” or “Harbor Walk” as delineated in the “Harbor Area - Pedestrian Network Map” shall be human in scale, and pedestrian-oriented... Building massing should be low near the waterfront, ‘stepping back’ from the water... Varied roof heights, and roofs at various heights, are encouraged to provide variety in roofscape and skyline.”

The image below on p. 119 of the Smart Plan illustrates best the spirit of the Smart Plan and is almost a perfect template for our proposal with a human-scaled building front (not a fence, steep incline or gravel parking stall), terracing back from the waterfront and parking resolved in the back of the property.



Thank you for your kind consideration in this matter. We trust that you will judge our ‘smart’ proposal favorably and help make our dreams come true!