

Design Rationale

The architecture of the Beach Towers has left a number of missed opportunities on the site. The negative urban realm of the existing site plan include: the large surface parking lot at the corner of Harwood and Cardero Street; the blank façade that extends virtually along the full frontage of the site along Beach Avenue; two different and substantial parkade accesses onto Cardero and the surface parking, parkade entrances and hardscaped plaza of the Columbus house on Harwood Street. The site on a whole is over fifty years old and is in need of rejuvenation. Our proposals propose to remediate and improve these spaces, provide enhanced amenities for existing and future tenants while respecting our Neighbours and the West end as a whole.

At the corner of Harwood and Cardero we propose an 8 storey rectilinear building setback 25' from the property line, to open up street views and to give clear unobstructed views of the water down the Cardero corridor for neighbours across Harwood at Cardero. The new building will be perched over what is a single new entrance to the underground parking, and supported by a V-shaped column which echoes the strong geometry of the existing structures. Visually this new form acts as a podium to the Douglas House on Beach Avenue. Physically, however, the mass is separated from the tower by a 20 foot wide grand stair which rises from the entrance courtyard along Cardero up to the Harwood Landscaping.

At the corner of Cardero and Beach, we propose to add a partially submerged one storey amenity building, Currently, in this location, Douglas House reaches grade at an entry court, situated midblock of the site on Cardero; At this elevation a circular balcony exists with a set in, one storey blank concrete parking structure below it. the proposed

amenity building's green roof will act as an extension of the entry court landscape. This space will act both as entry and as gathering space for the occupants, creating an opportunity for watching events on Beach Street such as the Fireworks displays in English Bay. Along Beach Avenue this structure will be exposed as a glass wall draped in vegetation, animating the street with the activity within.

Beyond this structure on Beach will be a series of two storey townhomes, featuring triangular balconies; and end units with cantilevered decks at level 2 & roof deck, echoing the grid shift and saw tooth form seen in the existing parking structure that they will replace. Above the townhomes will be a three storey low-rise structure. The Beach Avenue façade will be an extension of the townhomes below but the side elevations will feature highly glazed facades with exterior stairs to the second storey units. All of these ground oriented suites will be two bedroom units. The courtyard facing façade of the low-rise will feature two level suites with their living area on the second floor looking out over English Bay; and a two storey lobby for the upper units.

On Harwood Street (Parcel B), we propose to add two three storey structures on either side of the existing Columbus House. These will contain nine townhome style units with access either to the street or to the rear landscaped podium. This new massing will cover the existing exposed parking structure.

In total, across Parcel A & B we propose to add 139 new units (65 of which are 2 Bedroom units suitable for families). A net increase of 102 additional parking stalls and 211 bike parking stalls is proposed within Parcel A. The new development totals 109,087sf of FSR density and results in an overall increase of FSR across both sites of 0.94 bringing the combined FSR from 3.42 to 4.36.

The proposal falls within the West End planning area and its applicable guidelines which are addressed later in this document. By virtue of the property size and location, it is possible to add the new units with relatively limited impacts on surrounding residents. In order to accommodate the new development, minor relaxation of the normally desired separation distance between buildings may be required. However, this applies only to the separation from other buildings on the same property.

This project would be undertaken without any residents having to vacate their suites and the new amenity facility would be developed in advance of the existing one being demolished. There would be no 'reno-victions'. The project would meet applicable City of Vancouver sustainability requirements and would meet LEED Gold Equivalent requirements.

As is addressed later in this document earlier this year, our team had meetings with several neighbours, West End resident groups and the City leading up to this Rezoning Submission. Our preliminary concepts have been revised to take into account some concerns raised by the neighbours and the City including:

- Changing the form of development from a Tower and townhomes to a midrise, low-rise and townhomes.
- Setting back the new Midrise building 25' from the Property Line to open up street end views for neighbours and pedestrians.
- Recessing the Amenity building partially below grade to reduce its visual impact on the site and to reinforce the expression that the towers are resting upon a landscaped podium.
- Bringing the Columbus House Townhomes in line with concrete elements of tower.

The West End is at the crossroads between a new urbanism and an old paradigm. A significant percentage of West End housing stock is over 50 years old and all too many of these apartments are not being upgraded or renewed. New housing and a new attitude are needed to regenerate this aging stock and help maintain a vibrant and healthy neighbourhood. Our proposal for Beach Towers is an important step in this direction.

