

The Society

Co:Here encourages intentional communities shaped by solidarity with the poor, hospitality, friendship, prayer and simplicity. It provides vulnerable people with affordable, supportive housing.

The Society is affiliated with the Grandview Calvary Church (www.gcbchurch.ca) on East First Avenue at Salsbury Drive. They presently operate five similar but smaller facilities in the area as well as other programs designed to assist those in need.

Form and Expression Programme

Fundamental to the project is a vision of community life in which people share physical space, material resources, and life experiences together. The building has been designed to facilitate this.

Site Planning

The building is oriented in an east-west direction and located as close to the north of the property as is permitted by Planning. This creates and shields a large open space to the south that is designed to be an active urban garden. Site coverage of only 43% helps to maximize the open space available for the garden and minimizes view blockage and overlook to the properties to the south.

Planning

The main pedestrian entry is on the Victoria Drive (east) side of the building. Parking access and servicing is off the lane on the west side.

The main floor is the focus for the communal indoor and outdoor activities. Proposed uses include dining and living spaces, a quiet room, a community kitchen, a guest suite, a computer room, and administration spaces. The upper three floors contain twenty-six units organized into sub-groups of four or five. There is a mix of studios and one and two bedroom units. To increase affordability, the majority of the units are studios, four of which are accessible. The ends of the corridors on each upper level serve as small social and meeting spaces complete with outdoor balconies. Each social space has a stacked washer dryer, bulletin boards and places for seating.

The large south facing outdoor area provides both an outdoor gathering space and a garden space for intensive urban agriculture.

Massing

The proposed building is a four-storey wood frame structure on a single level of underground parking. The building mass of the building has been split into two along an east west axis. The flat roof portion in the centre combined with the glazed corridor ends effectively divides the east and west facades into two parts, helping to reduce the apparent scale of the building facing Victoria Drive and the lane. In addition, the roof form turns and is carried down the north and south facades of the building. This roof form relates to adjacent houses and provides an outward expression of the protective nature of the buildings purpose. The eaves on the

south side are located at the top of the second floor to reduce the apparent scale and on the north side at the top of the main floor. Windows on the upper floors are expressed as dormers in the sloping portions of the metal roof

A three-storey projection adjacent to the lane on the north side of the building on 1st Avenue modifies the scale of the building alongside the neighbours to the west and again reduces the apparent bulk of the building.

The building mass on the south is carried over a walkway along the north edge of the garden. This provides both shade to the south facing common living areas and protection from rain, maximizing the usability of the outdoor space.

The garden and other areas of the main floor are bounded by fences and trellises designed to allow views into the garden from the street and to support the growth of climbing plants.

The Pedestrian Realm

The pedestrian realm on two sides of the property is enhanced by the addition of trees and extensive planting. The existing Memorial Peace Garden at the corner of Victoria and 1st. is retained and renovated. In addition, it is proposed to provide a seating area close to the pedestrian crossing of 1st Avenue allowing the possibility of a brief refuge from the traffic.

Materials

The project is designed with standing seam metal roofs for durability and also to provide a finish that will remain relatively maintenance free during the life of the building. Elsewhere the cladding is wood, which not only provides warmth and texture but also relates to the adjacent residential buildings. Glazing is carefully placed to provide illumination and also minimized to increase the thermal performance of the envelope..

Rezoning Rationale/ Requested Variances

Current Zoning

The site is currently zoned RT-5. This zone permits multiple residential uses up to an FSR of 0.75, a maximum height of 10.7m (35 ft) and a maximum site coverage of 45%. To achieve the goals of the Society and address the need for low-income rental housing in the City of Vancouver, the site will require rezoning to allow additional density and height.

Proposed Density and Height

In recent years there has been a shift towards encouraging higher density on major arterial roads. However, many arterials do not have the zoning in place that supports the desired higher densities. This is being addressed by the City of Vancouver through neighbourhood visioning programs. Amendments to neighbourhood planning guidelines are currently being assessed and modified throughout the City of Vancouver.

This project is intended to help to address the desperate need for low income

housing in the Grandview Woodlands neighbourhood. It will also provide an incremental increase in economic activity and help reinforce the existing community culture of neighbourliness and support.

The Society is requesting a CD-1 zoning that allows multiple residential and associated amenity spaces with an FSR of 1.5, a maximum height of 15.1m (49.5ft), an average height of 13.7m (45ft), and a site coverage of 43%.

Parking / Loading / Bicycles

The residents will be a mixture of transitional homeless, low income and recent low-income immigrants. As such, it is fully anticipated that car ownership will be very low. It is proposed to utilize the same parking ratios that were established for the PHI projects. Seven cars have been set aside for residents and staff members who may occasionally require the use of a car. The additional parking provided will be allocated to church members attending Sunday services at the Grandview Calvary Church. Bicycle parking is provided to the Parking Bylaw standard. Sustainability Strategies

The project will be registered with the CAGBC and designed to the standards required to achieve LEED Gold NC 2009. This goal resonates with the client group who are actively engaged with ensuring this commitment is met or exceeded.

Energy

Energy use will be reduced by the design of a highly efficient envelope with continuous insulation, low glazing percentages, solar shading and provision of cross ventilation. Heat recovery from suite exhaust and ducted air supply to suites will add to energy savings and provide a quiet ventilation option to suites facing East 1st Avenue.

Tall narrow windows and day lighting of corridors will assist with reducing artificial lighting demands.

Water

Storm water from the south roof form will be channeled into barrels to contribute to the irrigation of the extensive garden areas. Other roof areas will be drained into a bio swale that surrounds the building on the north and east sides. This will pre condition water and slow its progress to the City storm water system. Low flush toilets and low flow fixtures will be used.

Material and Resources

A comprehensive Waste Management Plan will be incorporated during construction. After construction an extensive recycling / composting protocol will be established by the Society. In addition, there will be a focus on using both regional materials and materials with high recycled content.

Building Operations

The lifestyle adopted by residents will be sustainable with attention paid to the use of environmentally responsible cleaning and gardening chemicals. Building systems will be designed to be interactive and easy to maintain.