

Aug 23, 2021

Kevin Jones
Planning and Development
City of Port Moody
100 Newport Drive
Port Moody, BC V3H 5C3

Mr. Jones:

Re: 2025 St. Johns St. – Response to Council 1st Reading Comments

With respect to our project at 2025 St. Johns St., and in response to Council comments and the motion of June 15, 2021, please accept the following response letter and the attached submission package summarising changes and approach to these items.

Council passed the following motion:

That staff and the applicant consider the following elements:

- *Increase to an affordable housing component in line with the City's Affordable Housing Guidelines;*
- *Elimination of the Riparian Area encroachment;*
- *Completion of traffic study ready for Council review; and*
- *Increase to job generating space.*

1. Increase to an affordable housing component in line with the City's Affordable Housing Guidelines

Its worth repeating this project predated the Interim Affordable Housing Policy and, as such, it is challenging to match new policies that have considerable financial implications. Throughout the development of the project and in response to committee, Council and public comments, we have worked to improve the affordable housing offering – see summary in Table 1.

We respect the City's recognition of the need to supply more affordable housing and for providing clarity on its prioritisation. Moreover, the direction provided by Council with respect to adjusting the types and tenures of housing under the affordable housing umbrella is well-taken. It is important to consider new approaches to addressing the housing affordability crisis, and rent-to-own, indeed, appears to provide an innovative and successful way to get people into the market.

Accordingly, we have proposed a further adjustment to this project's affordable housing offering in order to bring it in-line and consistent with current policy. The total percentage of units will be 15%, composed of the 7.5% below-market rental and 7.5% rent-to-own. Furthermore, the unit

mix for both will be composed of 30% 2-bedroom and 70% 1-bedroom homes, which is the target unit mix outlined in the affordable housing policy – see summary Table 2.

The below-market rental rates are proposed to be determined by HILs to be consistent with the Affordable Housing Policy. The tenure of these homes will be in perpetuity for the life of the building.

Table 1 - Summary of Previous Affordable Housing Proposals

Proposal 1 – Sept 2019	
Market Rental	22 homes
	<i>Tenure: 20 years</i>
Proposal 2 – October 2020	
Market Rental	20 homes
Below-Market Rental	4 homes
	<i>Tenure: life of the building</i>
Proposal 3 – June 2021	
Market Rental	19 homes
Below-Market Rental	7 homes
	<i>Tenure: life of the building</i>

Table 2 - Summary of Current Affordable Housing Proposal

Current Proposal			
	1-Bed	2-Bed	Total
Rent-to-Own	13	5	18
Below-Market Rental*	13	5	18
Total	26	10	36
	<i>* Tenure: life of the building</i>		

2. Elimination of the Riparian Area Encroachment

Through our experience at the George project and from consultation with local environmental groups, we are keenly aware of the importance the Port Moody community places on environmental considerations. Our approach, from the beginning of this project, was to do as much as possible to adhere to the City's environmental setback bylaw. Initially, we had requested a slightly larger variance, but have since been able to refine it to the minimum feasible depth. We have now reached a limit whereby any further change would create extreme inefficiencies for the design and construction of the parkade.

It should be noted that the project meets and exceeds the 15m Riparian Protection Enhancement Areas (RPEA) setback. However, the site requires an approximate 3m variance to a segment of

the Riparian Transition Area (RTA) line where a ‘peaked’ section of the line overlaps the parkade – see Figure 1.

The configuration of the RTA is such that a small triangular section overlaps with the southern edge of the parkade design. As illustrated in Figures 2 to 4, adjusting the parkade to accommodate the full 5m RTA setback would result in the following impacts to the parkade and other key functions of the building:

- Parking – 27 parking stalls, 9 on each of the three levels, would be affected and need to be relocated, requiring additional levels of the parkade to be added.
- Bicycle Facilities – The current building is well-suited to bicycles as it provides direct access to the main bike lockers, repair room and bike wash station. Accommodating the full setback would eliminate this bicycle-friendly access and require it to come from the parkade. In addition, the number of bike lockers would also be impacted requiring these be relocated to lower levels of the parkade.
- Electrical Substation Room – BC Hydro stipulates minimum equipment clearances within substation rooms. With this space reduction, a new location for the room would need to be determined which would displace more parking, storage, and bike facilities. These facilities would need to be relocated lower in the parkade and likely increasing the depth to the excavation.
- Building 2 Lobby – Due to the sloping nature of the site, there is a grade difference between the street and the lobby, and between the lobby and the first level of the building. The additional space constraints make meeting the wheelchair accessibility requirement of the lobby, as well as the exiting requirements, of this building extremely difficult. This would likely result in unconventional building entry and circuitous routing for accessible access.

The result of this inefficiency means the parkade would need to be extended down to at least a fourth, if not a partial fifth, level. Construction costs aside, there is an environmental cost associated with all the extra excavation, structural concrete and steel. Furthermore, the added cost undermines the project’s ability to provide other amenities such as, public art and affordable housing.

As compensation for the variance, we will be providing off-site riparian restoration and removal of invasive species for the ravine located to the south of the site and representing an area of over 1700m².

Figure 1 - RTA Variance

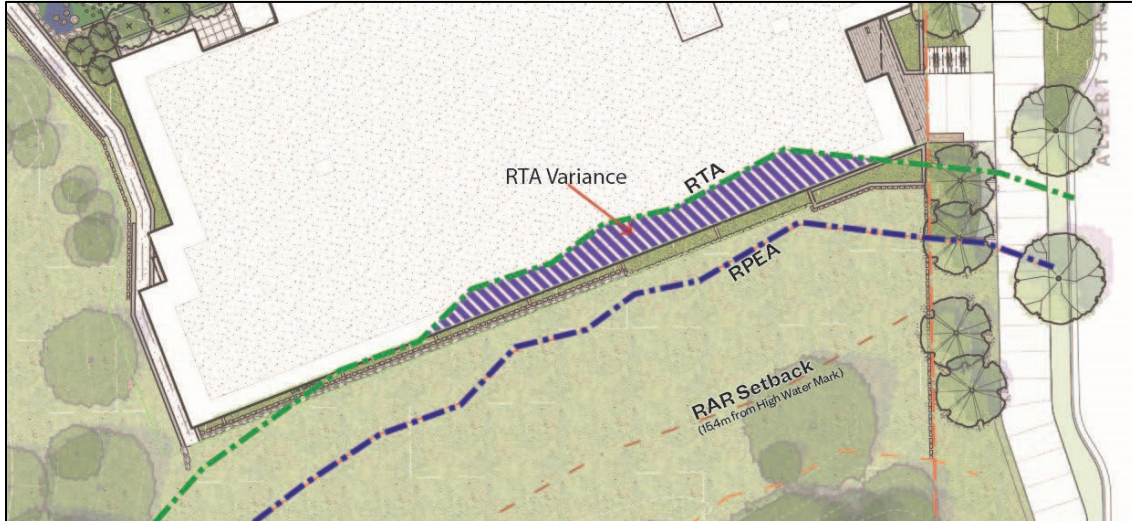


Figure 2 - Impact of Full RTA Setback – Level 1



Figure 3 - Impact of Full RTA Setback – P1 & P2

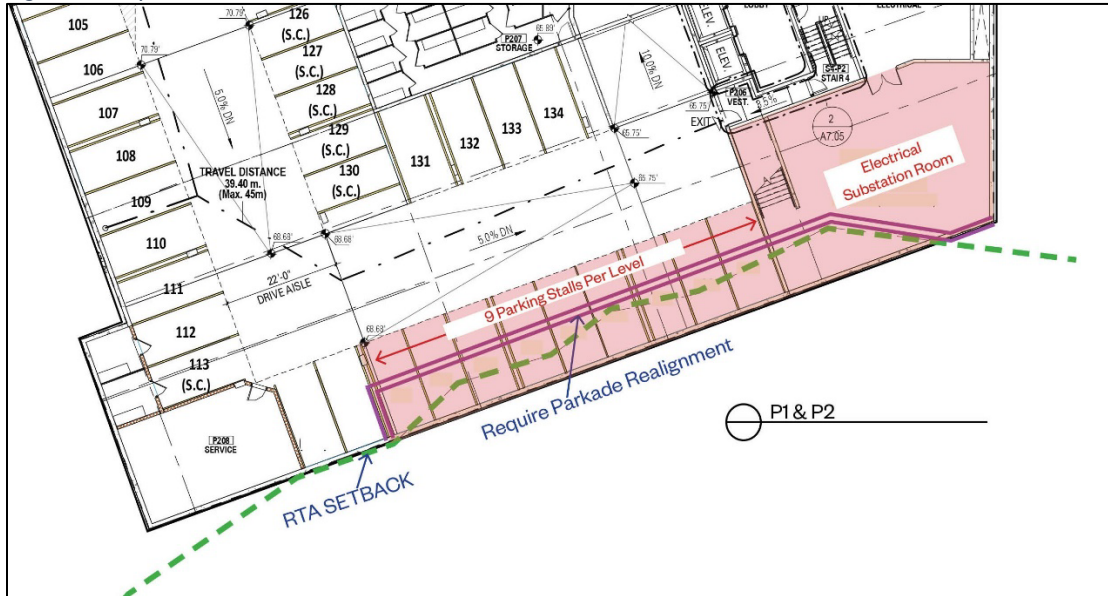


Figure 4 - Impact of Full RTA Setback – P3



3. Completion of Traffic Study Ready for Council Review

A finalised traffic study has been submitted to staff with this resubmission material. We trust this will be made available to Council for review.

4. Increase to Job Generating Space

In designing and configuring the employment space, we focused on the quality of the space over quantity. We also wanted to ensure the project respected the community's concerns over traffic. We heard from the public that they didn't want more commercial as it is a greater traffic generator. The amount of commercial space proposed was felt to be appropriate for the site.

The site naturally accommodates commercial at the corner by virtue of the sloping grade and the visual exposure it is afforded to traffic at the intersection of St. Johns and the Barnet Hwy. Increasing the commercial space to extend further west or south on the less visible parts of the site limit the feasibility of future businesses here. As this is already outside the commercial core, extension beyond the primary focal point risks resulting in spaces which would be difficult to lease and impose and even stands the threat of being chronically vacant.

The sloping nature of the site also presents design challenges as it relates to accessibility. Expanding commercial space to the south and east along the ground plane further exacerbates this issue.

5. Rooftop Amenity Outdoor Space

In addition to the items requested in Council's motion, we have provided further refinement and expansion to the rooftop amenity areas. As illustrated in Figures 5 and 6, additional planters and extensive planting has been added throughout the rooftop provide a more natural and inviting setting. The number of trees has been increased to provide for more natural shading and to help reduce 'heat island' effect. The intent of the changes was to sense that the area is a lush garden space while also affording people views of the water and mountains.

The overall rooftop amenity space has been increased by 20% to not only provide for improved programming and landscaping, but also to provide better separation of activities. The urban agriculture components are separated from the outdoor dining and recreation areas to allow each to operate more freely and without potential conflict.

Figure 5 - Building 1 Rooftop Amenity

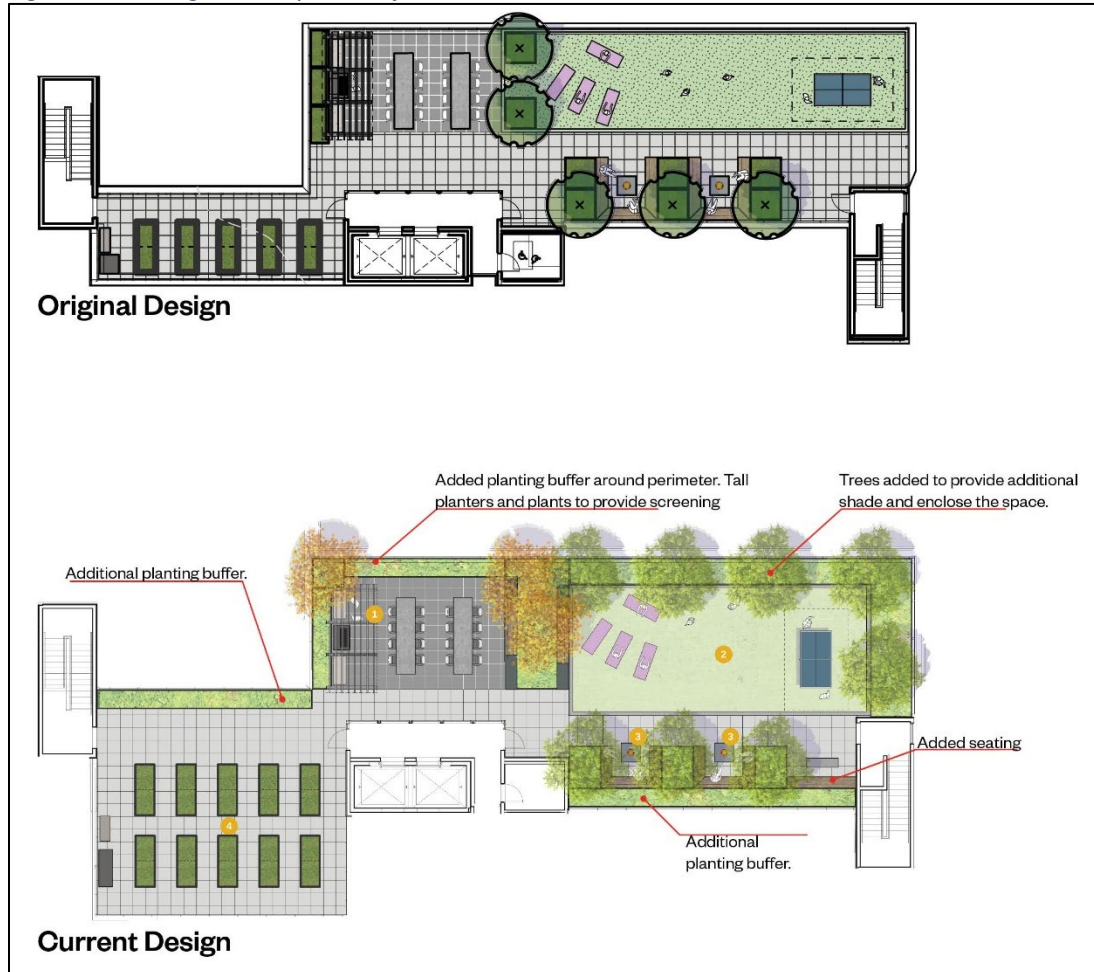
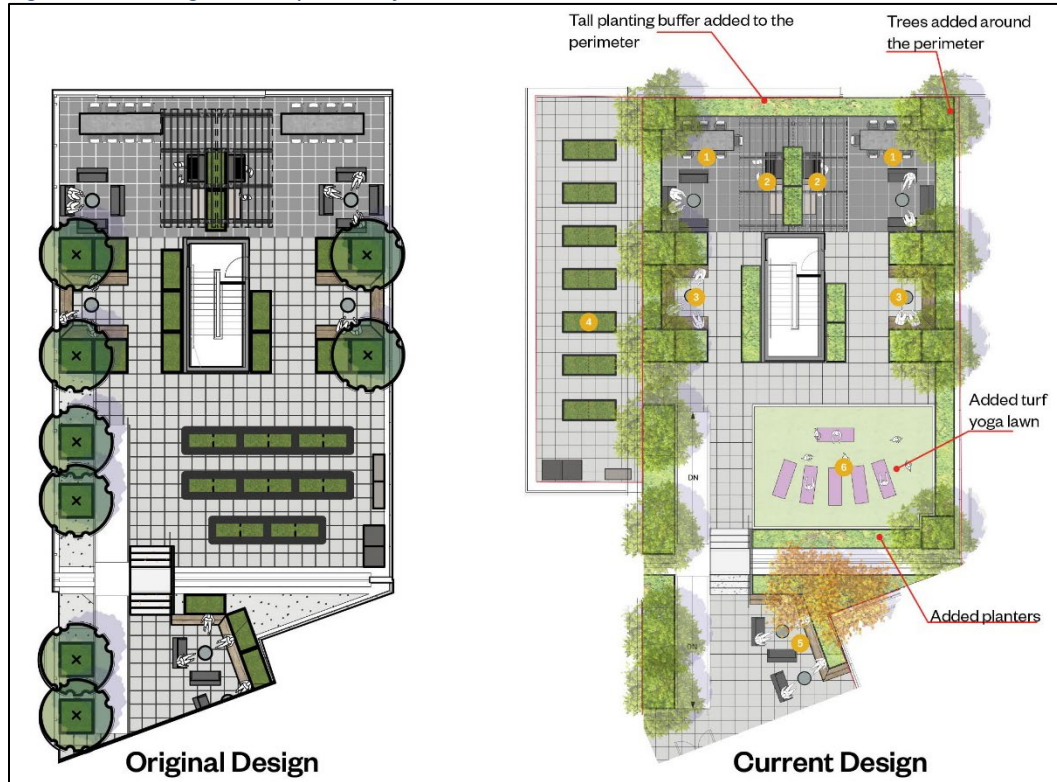


Figure 6 - Building 2 Rooftop Amenity



We appreciate Council's thoughtful feedback and trust we have adequately addressed concerns raised. We look forward to presenting the project and hearing the community's comments at a Public Hearing.

Sincerely,

Nic Paolella

Vice President, Development