



To: Richmond City Council

Date: June 13, 2023

From: Joe Erceg
Chair, Development Permit Panel

File: DP 17-766824

Re: Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on March 11, 2020

Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of Development Permit (DP 17-766824) for the property at 8100 No. 5 Road, be endorsed and the Permit so issued.

Peter Russell
Panel Member, Development Permit Panel

For
Joe Erceg
Chair, Development Permit Panel

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on March 11, 2020.

DP 17-766824 – MATTHEW CHENG ARCHITECTS INC. – 8100 NO. 5 ROAD
(March 11, 2020)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to permit the development of a temple at 8100 No. 5 Road on a site zoned “Assembly (ASY)” and that is partially designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). A variance is included in the proposal to increase the maximum height for buildings from 12 m to 13.75 m to allow for two roof-top sculpture elements.

The applicant, Matthew Cheng, Matthew Cheng Architect Inc., provided a brief visual presentation on the project, noting the following:

- the subject property is located in the Agricultural Land Reserve Area (ALR) and zoned “Assembly (ASY)” and “Agriculture (AG1)”, with portions designated as Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA);
- the agricultural product grown on the subject property is intended for the use of the congregation or for donation;
- the existing ESA in the “Assembly (ASY)” zoned portion of the property has been found to be historically disturbed and will be removed and compensated in the form of an agricultural buffer area between the proposed development and the agricultural area;
- a four-meter wide driveway will be provided along a portion of the north property line to provide access to the site’s agricultural area;
- a drainage system will be installed on the south and west sides of the site;
- a generous setback is proposed from the front property line along No. 5 Road for the proposed religious assembly building;
- the originally proposed vehicle entrance to the site has been relocated to the northwest corner to improve vehicular traffic and enhance pedestrian safety as recommended by the City’s Advisory Design Panel;
- the proposed number of surface parking stalls to be provided around the proposed building complies with the City’s Zoning Bylaw requirement;
- a pedestrian walkway is proposed around the building to separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic;
- bicycle racks and lockers will be provided in the proposed development;
- the main floor of the proposed building will be elevated to comply with the City’s Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw;
- a wheelchair lift will be installed in the middle of the proposed building opposite the accessible parking stalls to enhance accessibility of disabled persons;
- the building has been designed to reflect the traditional South Indian Hindu Temple;
- the main building components include a dining area and a worship hall;
- a building height variance is proposed to accommodate a small portion of the gate tower which is an important religious symbol;

- the highest point of the proposed building is significantly lower than the height of adjacent religious buildings;
- a parapet will be installed to screen the building's rooftop mechanical equipment; and
- appropriate safety, security and sustainability features will be incorporated into the proposed development.

The landscape architect, Caelan Griffiths, PMG Landscape Architects, provided a brief overview on the projects landscaping features, noting the following:

- different surface paving treatments on the site are proposed according to their specific uses;
- the proposed ESA planting for the agricultural landscape buffer includes native plant species which provide habitat for pollinators;
- flowering trees and bright perennials are proposed for the "Assembly (ASY)" zoned portion of the site; and
- bollard lighting is proposed to avoid light pollution and enhance pedestrian safety and wayfinding on the site.

In reply to queries from the Panel, Mr. Cheng acknowledged that (i) the applicant will consider installing on-site electric vehicle and bicycle charging stations although these are not required for the project, (ii) the proposed rooftop mechanical equipment will be screened and hidden from adjacent religious buildings, and (iii) the main floor of the building will be elevated by 1.4 meters above the road.

Subsequent to the panel meeting, the applicant revised development plans to provide on-site electric vehicle consistent with DPP guidelines (5% of parking stalls equipped with conduit for electrical vehicle outlets and 5% of parking stalls equipped with 240-volt electrical outlets) and bicycle charging for all Class 1 bicycle parking spaces.

Staff noted that (i) the project complies with the required flood construction level for the area, (ii) there is a Servicing Agreement for frontage works and service connections as a condition for approval, (iii) the proposed height variance for the project is less than the height variances approved by the City for similar religious buildings along the No. 5 Road corridor, (iv) there are no habitable spaces associated with the proposed height variance, which is centrally located to minimize shadowing impacts on adjacent developments, and (v) the approximately 640-square meter on-site landscaping for the "Assembly (ASY)" zoned portion of the site has a similar planting palette with the ESA compensation planting on the proposed agricultural landscape buffer and also performs an ecological function.

The Panel expressed support for the project, noting that it is well thought out and the proposed building height variance is minimal.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.