

Design Rationale for 778 East 27th Avenue, Vancouver, BC

1. Introduction

This character retention project intends to do just that; retain the character of the original 1910 side-gabled vernacular house. The house features a very prominent roof with a central ridge line running east/west, framing a centred, front-facing, upper storey, gabled dormer. The house features a full-width front porch held up by basic, square posts. The front door is set slightly to one side of the façade, in line with the front stairs and a bay window on one side of the porch. The front and side gables remain prominent but are decorated with exposed, wooden knee brackets.

At some point in the past, the house was covered with aluminum siding and a number of haphazard additions were added to the rear of the home. We propose removing the past additions and replacing them with a modern, glass façade in order to maximise the natural light and better connect the interior to the exterior.

The infill reflects the character house, primarily with the east/west running ridge line, prominent side gables and a front-facing gabled dormer. In addition, most of the windows will be single-hung style windows and the colour scheme will be the same as the character house.

2. Roof

- a. Character House: the existing, non-compliant roof line (slightly over height) will be retained and extended at the back of the house in order to provide a continuous, double ridge.
- b. Infill: the infill reflects the character house, primarily with the east/west running ridge line, prominent side gables and a front-facing gabled dormer.

3. Windows

- a. Character House: the single sash, wooden frame bay windows at the front and a single, horizontal window on the west side feature leaded, clear glass. In addition, there is a single stained-glass window left of the entry door. The intent is to retain the decorative glass windows where possible.

The approach to windows on the north, east and west sides of the house is consistent with the original size and single-sash style with the exception of a proposed, fixed vertical sidelight on the east side of the house. This sidelight aligns with the interior stairwell and allows the natural light to stream into the central living area on the main floor. Also, this window provides a beautiful transition from old to new.

- b. Infill: the infill will have single-sash style windows to compliment the original windows of the character house.

4. Entrance Stairs and Porches

- a. Character House: the front porch extends along the full length of the façade and will be retained. The trim detail around the beam of the front porch will be increased and the existing glazing on both sides of the porch will be removed and restored to original, open sides. We are requesting a relaxation in order to provide a small area of covered porch off the rear of the house (also, see sundecks below). The front rails will be increased to 42” by adding spindles to the existing closed porch walls and stair walls will be constructed to match the porch walls, providing more visual weight to the base of the front façade.

5. Balconies and Sundecks

- a. Character House: the existing house has an 88.15 sq ft second storey sundeck which will be replaced with a new, more integral sundeck, measuring 65.53 sq ft. This sundeck naturally creates a covered area of 65.53 sq ft off the main floor, sundeck below. The new and proposed sundeck on the main floor replaces the existing sunroom and extends to the full width of the rear, modern addition.
- b. Infill: the infill proposes a 74.50 sq ft sundeck on the south east corner of the upper storey, providing access to the outdoors, views to both side and rear lanes and a sunny, southern exposure.

6. Exterior Walls and Finishing

- a. Character House: we intend to remove the existing aluminum siding on all sides of the house, to expose and restore the original, narrow, horizontal, wooden, lap siding. The new rear addition will instead have vertical, wood siding to compliment the original siding but make obvious the transition from old to new.
- b. Infill: we are proposing horizontal wood siding to reflect the original siding of the character home.

7. Front Yard Set Back (FYSB)

- a. Character House: the existing house sits forward of the allowable front yard set back, but we are seeking a relaxation in order to maintain the existing location of the house on the property.

8. Side Yard Set Back (SYSB)

- a. Character House: the existing house is east of the allowable side yard set back, but we are seeking a relaxation in order to maintain the existing location of the

house on the property. Because of this, we are proposing a west side yard entry to Unit #2 (basement suite). There is an existing bump-out on the west side of the house; proposing to extend the length of the bump-out while complying with the side yard set back.

- b. Infill: complies with both required side yard set backs.

9. Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

- a. Character House: combined, the renovated character house and the infill are under the allowable 0.85 FSR by 4.66 sq ft. Although the overall FSR of the character house is proposed to increase by 632.45 sq ft, the owners will be providing a second unit within the basement of the house.

10. Building Depth

- a. Character House: the proposed building depth is actually reduced from the existing 'building' depth with the exception of the new, rear deck. Including the deck, the renovated character house complies with the allowable building depth of 35%.
- b. Infill: We are seeking a relaxation due to the 10 ft x 10 ft corner cut, the infill extends into the rear yard by approximately 6 inches, but still maintains more than the required 16 ft between character house and infill. Additionally, we proposed the preferred single car garage plus parking pad rather than a 2-car garage to reduce overall massing.

11. Landscaping

- a. Character House: in order to accommodate the new infill, we propose removing Tree #4 Magnolia and Tree #5 Pine from the rear side yards, and replacing these two trees with a Pacific Dogwood and a Katsura in the front yard. Although the rear deck off the main floor and the concrete well off the basement level have been modified to accommodate the root zone of Tree #2 Plum, the Owners would like to remove this tree also. Please note this tree is in direct conflict with the Fire Department's access route to the rear door of the infill.

Generally, the proposed plantings are low maintenance and frame the entry path, and the parking pad. The plantings on the west side of the front yard provide privacy to Unit #2 (basement suite)

- b. Infill: Plantings line the path to a friendly entry way. Permeable pavers will be used on the parking pad. The corner cut will remain as is to accommodate lane traffic.

