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David Wong Architect AIBC

April 10, 2015

Board of Variance  
City of Burnaby  
4949 Canada Way  
Burnaby, BC V5G 1M2

4188   
Re: 4178 Rumble Street, Burnaby BC

Dear Board of Variance,

The R2 zoned lot at 4178 Rumble Street, like other properties in the neighbourhood sits on a sloped site. One of the unique aspects of this lot is a very steep drop across the depth of the site, especially near the top (north) portion facing Rumble Street, where it drops 8' over a 20' run (i.e. 40% slope). This rapid drop-off was probably created when the site was cleared decades ago to prepare a levelled area for the two dwellings that were situated there. The "cut" from the levelled area was left behind forming this bit of steep drop.

R2 zoning requires the height of a new building measured from the average of the lowest 2 datum points of the proposed new building footprint. Applying this criteria, the rear of the proposed house would project above the building height envelope by approximately 2 feet due to its steep slope.

Located just below this steep sloped area, is a mature flowering dogwood tree, which we have carefully designed the proposed new house around. This dogwood tree is not in the best of health, and a City of Burnaby landscape inspector who visited the site had indicated that the dogwood tree may be removed, due to its poor condition. The new owners, however, wish to restore this tree, along with all the other trees on the property to their full vitality. In addition, the new owners have just relocated and transplanted over 100 mature trees and shrubs from their existing residence to 4178 Rumble Street, as their existing residence along with all the other houses on that block are slated for demolition for a major redevelopment.

The proposed design of the new house will respect intrinsic site layout qualities — to be located away from existing mature vegetation (on their property and neighbours), and to follow the contours of the site in an effort to minimize cut and fill. The house is designed to be contained in a smaller footprint to minimize tree removal, to minimize its encroachment onto the landscape, and to minimize its mass and shadow effects within and away from neighbours. To achieve the smaller footprint, the house design

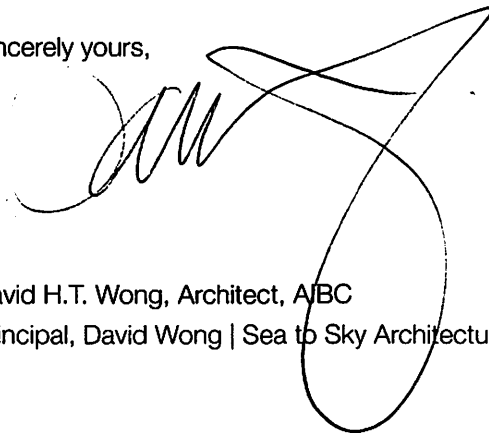
will allocate some of its permitted floor area from the lower floor onto the upper floor to maintain a smaller footprint, and to avoid a "wedding cake" massing; the house steps down the site, and is oriented towards the south and south-west to maximize solar exposure, and is designed to collect 100% of the rain water into cisterns for natural irrigation and non-potable use.

In addition, R2 zoning states a front yard setback at 24.6' or a setback based on adjacent neighbours' front yard setback averaging to help determine the setback of a proposed structure(s) from the front (street) property line. The intention of this regulation is to encourage an approximate similar front yard setback of houses forming the streetscape. A unique situation occurs along this stretch of Rumble Street including the entire block of 4100 block Rumble Street where it does not have a rear lane— some houses and structures on this block are accessed by private driveways off from Rumble Street. The house immediately west of our site, located at 4168 Rumble Street, is set back 138.6' from the street. In applying the front yard averaging formula, this would push our proposed house and garage to almost 60' into the site.

Due to the hardship the existing steep site and existing natural site features present, and of the location of the adjacent house, we respectfully request the Board of Variance to favourably consider:

1. a variance on the height on this house design,
2. a variance on the front yard averaging setback for the main house,
3. a variance on the front yard averaging setback for the garage, and,
4. a variance on the allocation of permitted floor area from the lower floors to the second floor (R2 zoning specifies 50% of floor area below) to maintain the building's tighter footprint and smaller massing.

Sincerely yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Wong', is written over the signature line and extends down towards the printed name.

David H.T. Wong, Architect, AIBC  
Principal, David Wong | Sea to Sky Architecture and Urban Ecology