

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, September 21st, 2011**

MINUTES

- Present:** T. Cailles
K. Kallweit Graham
K. Kristensen
S. McFarlane
M. Messer
M. Saii
B. Spencer
C. Taylor
- Staff:** B. Westmacott, Planner
C. Perry, Supervisor, Engineering Services
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
- Guests:** **211-217 West 1st Street**
Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Inc.
Bruce Howden, Rafii Architects Inc.
Sherry O'Brien, Red Lion Management
Stephanie Martell, Red Lion Management
Marlene Messer, DMG Landscape Architects
355 East 12th Street
Karl Wein, Karl Wein and Associates
332 East 10th Street
Carman Kwan, Hearth Architectural
Joe Muego, Hearth Architectural
Ravi Khakh, CityLine Developments
351 East 9th Street
Randall and Pauline Mitchell, Owners
267 – 269 East 4th Street
Kevin Butler, Kd.B. Design Studio Ltd.
Denis Accili, Owner
- Absent:** Peter Kennedy
Y. Khalighi
Councillor Trentadue
-

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held August 17th, 2011

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held August 17th, 2011 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

There was a discussion on duplex guidelines which would help the Panel when reviewing projects. Staff is working on the issue. G. Penway told the group that eventually the hope is to have duplexes pre-zoned with building permits; a lot of effort goes into the process to get one more unit. If good design guidelines were in place with controls that worked, projects would only come to the Panel if needed.

The Chair noted the issues concerning rezoning; any rezoning increases the value of the land, so there is an expectation that there be some benefit to the public. The Panel sees developers wanting the potential profit without providing added benefit; rezoning should come with a sense of responsibility and should add to the infrastructure.

A member noted that many of the rezoning applications are in heritage areas so there should be some architectural merit in the design. G. Penway agreed that effective design controls would have to be in place such as those in the City of Vancouver.

3. Staff Update

Barb Westmacott introduced herself to the group; she will be the staff liaison for the coming months.

Harbourside OCP Amendment: At the September 12th Council meeting the decision to establish a task force to review material produced to date with respect to the proposed OCP amendment was deferred to January 2012.

140-150 West 15th: The Zoning Bylaw was amended and adopted at the September 12th Council Meeting. The applicant reduced parking by 10 stalls and added one more VRS unit.

137 St. David's Avenue: First Reading was passed at the September 12th Council meeting and the project was referred to Public Hearing. Concern was expressed about the roof top deck on the garage.

129-141 West 2nd Street: The Public Hearing was on September 19th. Second and Third readings were passed unanimously. (Bob Spencer was acknowledged as the author of the Lower Lonsdale Planning Study).

1835 Lonsdale Avenue: Mixed use building. Demolition of this property was approved at the September 19th Council meeting. The Applicant was encouraged to apply for a rezoning application to include one additional floor with four rental units above the three commercial floors. (The current building has four rental units).

721 Chesterfield Avenue: The DVP was approved at the September 19th Council meeting.

318 East 12th Street (Duplex rezoning): This was approved at the September 19th Council meeting. The Public Hearing will be on October 24th.

250-252 East 10th Street (Rezoning, Heritage Designation and Strata Conversion): This was approved 5-2 at the September 19th Council meeting; those opposed felt the development was "too dense". The Public Hearing will be on November 7th.

Reorganization of the Advisory Bodies: input from larger working group was received. Council has agreed to go ahead. Next couple of months there will be input for the Advisory Bodies to review. Council is prepared for Heritage to be included in the Sense of Place Committee.

Marlene Messer left the meeting and joined the delegation for 211-217 West 1st Street as the landscape architect.

4. 211-217 West 1st Street (OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application)

The Chair read the resolution from the September 14th APC meeting.

G. Penway provided the context of the project. It is an OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application. The neighbouring site is currently being developed at 3.2 FSR. The project is high density but not high rise. The application is to rezone from Industrial to Mixed Use from 2.6 to approximately 4.2 FSR. The building will consist of 60 rental units above a commercial ground floor. The height variance requested is comparable to the project to the east.

Staff wanted ADP's comments on the overall liveability of the residential units, especially those oriented east, west and south.

Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Inc., reviewed the project:

- The owners decided to build rental and several years ago approached Council with two alternatives: a five-storey building versus high rise. Council approved the present height.
- The site slopes one and a half stories downwards from 1st Street to the lane.
- The two levels of underground parking have separate access points due to the slope.
- A courtyard was created to complement the neighbouring development.
- One third of the building is open to the south; we believe the layout is fine for a rental building.
- On 1st Street the 25 foot wide lot to the west will not be part of the project.
- Staff preferred that the project not be set back from the sidewalk; so it is at the sidewalk with a glass canopy.
- The residential floor plans are identical so that the project can break even.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Is the courtyard shared space? A: The suites on level 2 have private patios in the courtyard.
- Question for staff: The current zoning is industrial and the OCP is 2.6 FSR? The 25 foot adjacent lot has the capacity to go to 2.6 FSR? A: Yes, if they can fit it on the site.
- Will the courtyard be part of the neighbouring courtyard? A: The projects are divided, our courtyard is higher; there are wide planters separating the two.

- Both courtyards are shaded most of the year? A: Between May and September there is some sun. The distance across the courtyards is about 56 feet.
- The height of the building? A: 45 feet.
- How big are the balconies? A: Six and a half feet; every unit has a balcony.
- Did you look at using the roof? A: It is a wood frame building and we have not had a good experience with using the roofs on wood frame buildings.
- The architectural expression? A: It is simple; we want it to complement the neighbouring building. The client wanted something timeless.
- What references are you are basing it on? A: Simple, older residential buildings such as those found in London, England. Is there a specific reference to Lower Lonsdale? A: No.
- The materials palette? A: It is a cementitious panel with corner units so there will be no caulking at the corners. The main floor is coated concrete and the rest is cladded including the zero lot line. The trellis is painted aluminum like the windows
- The units on the courtyard level on concrete slab, are they private to the units? A: Yes.
- Are the units accessible? A: 80% of the units are Level 2 Accessible.
- Is the trellis on the north side glassed? A: Yes, to keep the rain from the patio doors.
- How is the wall between the two courtyards going to be treated? A: There will be a green screen on the other project which we have also designed.
- Are the access doors to the balconies on the south side glazed? A: All the patio doors are glazed. They are swing doors to allow wheelchair access.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I am concerned about general access to direct sunlight and useable outdoor space: there is no public space with guaranteed sunshine. I would have hoped that the courtyard for this building augmented the courtyard to the other building so that the two became better; it is really a light well rather than any kind of useable green space.
- The architecture does not have a residential character to me. At first glance I thought it was a parking structure. I am not sure how it relates to North Vancouver. It has a civic institutional character about it; it could have a friendlier look.
- I am concerned about the units facing into the courtyard; Light wells should be used for secondary windows, not be the main source of light.
- The Advisory Planning Commission suggested that one of the courtyards be public.
- I do not mind the material palette but feel that the panelling might have a plastic feel to it.
- I like the proposal and location. Rental is needed.
- This unit worries me; it is like the tenement buildings of the 30's which is not a good image. You do not need to go back to that past to establish an identity for this building.
- The rear portion behind the movie theatre has a very gloomy outlook.
- Affordable housing is commendable and important to do; it should not compromise liveability issues. I find it difficult to support it. I appreciate the challenges in developing the scheme. It is a sensible solution to an awkward and poor site. It could be a more compelling scheme if more height was available and you did not have to go to the property lines. A 12-storey tower would be a good approach. The success of the project hinges on the liveability of the central units. The light well on the east side compromises the building which is under construction. Developing the neighbouring property to the west would have an impact on the western studio suites. I prefer future looking projects rather than the past; there are forward-looking examples of rental housing.
- Is it possible to add another floor to it am open it up for tenants by staggering the levels?
- Question to staff: what is the procedure to get more height? A: We do not have a problem with a six-storey building; Council would have to support it and the applicant would have to decide if they wanted to do that.

- I echo the concerns about the liveability of the interior units. I like the suggestion about modification and the redistribution of density to get more light into the units. I do not find it a timeless piece of architecture; using today's technology the expression is monolithic, the motifs applied to the building are similar to a post modern expression which has dated in a short time. The building on the corner is a far better expression.

Presenter's comments:

- Re the provision of outdoor space, there is a big park with a playground right across the street as well as Waterfront Park.
- Re the liveability of the interior units in the courtyard, they look out across 56 feet which is in line with some of the buildings in Olympic Village.
- Some things had to be compromised for affordability.
- The character of the building is a matter that could be changed.
- Adding another floor is not feasible in a wooden building; the economics do not work in a concrete building. The message from staff was to stay in the height and match what is already happening on the corner. We came to Council with a proposed 14-storey building many years ago.
- If we were not echoing the other building, the courtyard would be worse with a wall and not the distance to the other building.

M. Sali joined the meeting at 6: 40 pm.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application for 211-217 West 1st Street and feels that the following have not been adequately resolved:

The provision of natural light to the interior lower level residential units; the Panel requests that the architect consider more innovative ways of utilizing current architectural design techniques to project natural light down to these levels;

AND THAT the architectural expression be reconsidered to reflect a friendlier and more residential character more consistent with its time and place.

Carried Unanimously

5. 355 East 12th Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project. It is in the mid-block area. The application is to rezone the RS-1 property to a Comprehensive Development zone to allow a duplex on the site. The CD zoning is required to vary the minimum lot size by 20 square feet to permit a duplex on the site.

The following staff concerns have been addressed: privacy issues for the rear unit, access off the lane. The awkward layout for the kitchen and powder rooms in the front unit has been resolved. The living room seems cramped

Karl Wein, Karl Wein & Associates, reviewed the presentation boards to the Panel:

- Due to the shape of the lot, a front and back duplex are proposed.

- Because the lot slopes there is a break in the building where the units meet.
- The front unit's yard will be in the front. The back unit will have the middle garden area.
- The staircases are open to give a spacious feel to a small area.
- The entry to the powder room has been changed so that it is not off the kitchen area.
- The doors to the parking at the back have been changed so that they will not interfere with the parked cars.
- The master bedrooms have good-sized decks.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- The side yards are impeded by the access to the cellar, what about garden equipment?
A: It will come down the lane.
- Do the rain gardens have overflows? A: Yes.
- The pathway at the front is inconsistent in the plans? A: It will match the landscape plan.
- The entrance on Unit A is open to below? A: It is a sunken patio; there is also one on Unit B.
- What is the elevation from the gate to the stairs going down to the entry? A: It will drop towards the house.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I quite like the form. I like the entrance to Unit B facing 12th Street. It is a very long, narrow lot. The main presentation is to the street and it is disjointed and needs cohesion.
- I am trying to make sense of the landscape plan. The entry experience to Unit B with the pathway off the road is very narrow. There are plants right up to the foundation under the overhang; I do not know how they will thrive and they will make the path seem narrower.
- I am not sure how you get to the patio on Unit B. The rain garden at unit A will need to have to be done very well to look like an attractive entrance feature. Unit B has a covered deck but in terms of useful outdoor space, it would be better not to have lawn, just plantings. You need to take out the sequoias; they are not an appropriate tree in the long term.
- I am generally in favour of the scheme; it is a sensible way to deploy the parts on the site response to the lane and 12th Street. 8 foot living rooms seem too small to me; there would be some challenges if the drawings showed furniture in the suites. An editing process and some simplicity would enhance your scheme. The different types and sizes of windows seem random and could be stronger if more thoughtfully considered. The roof forms seem expedient; they are not helping to differentiate one unit from another.
- The backyard seems bisected by the pathway, move it closer to the side yard to give more usable space.
- It is not apparent there is a positive connection between the interior living spaces and the exterior landscaping. It is not clear how the patios connect to the lawn spaces. The identity and address of the rear unit is not adequate; there is nothing to distinguish between it and the recess in the facade of the unit. The front elevation is too busy.
- In the future you should show how the development sits in context relative to height and scale.
- Some drawings do not help themselves. There is a walkway route from the patio deck to the street side. The other patio deck on the south side goes into the garden. The roof line works quite well with the massing.

Presenter's comments:

- No comments

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 355 East 12th Street and does not recommend approval of the submission pending resolution of the following issues:

- Design development to simplify the architectural expression with the intent of reducing the number of window types, roof forms, balcony details and other exterior details;
- Design development to improve the relationship between interior and exterior spaces;
- Reconsideration of the inappropriately large trees i.e. dwarf sequoias;
- Further development of the entrance experience to the rear unit;
- Provide clarity and coordination between the landscape and architectural plans with the goals of enhancing physical access, creating a positive sense of entry, and to simplify maintenance.

**Carried
7 - in favour
1 - opposed**

Karen Kallweit Graham declared a conflict of interest due to a previous professional association with the presenter and left the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

M. Saii left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

6. 332 East 10th Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project. The application is to rezone the property to allow a duplex on the site. The site is in an area covered by the Heritage Character Area – East 10th Street Development Guidelines and although not listed on the current Heritage Inventory, it is included in the Draft Heritage Registry as a Category A Heritage Building.

The Chair read the September 13th Heritage Advisory Commission motion.

Carman Kwan, Hearth Architectural, reviewed the proposed project.

- The existing building has been added on to many times and is not intact with its original intent. There are cracks in the existing foundation and poor renovations have been carried out e.g. there are exposed walls under cladding.
- The Heritage Registry does not say what makes the building unique.
- The building has no cohesiveness as a historical entity with a mixture of metal cladding, original wood cladding and newer wood cladding for instance.
- Staff had asked them to look at the scroll boards, ribbon windows, double verandas to inform the design of the new duplex.
- The site is underutilized in terms of the footprint.
- There will be a single car garage for each unit.
- The front design tries to give the appearance of a single family home not a duplex.
- The proposed duplex is 30 feet high which is shorter than the existing building.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- What is the relationship of the plane surrounding the door on the right? A: It is a recessed porch.
- Why use Hardie panel material which is not a heritage material, and why not use it on all sides? A: We looked at a 4" exposure. The massing looks larger when it is all the same and does not look right when all around the building. The board and batting gives it a nicer feel and breaks the massing down.
- Can you recycle the original barge board? A: It is the wrong geometry and we do not know the condition.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- The front porch is useless; it should be larger, three feet is too small for a chair or a pot. The patio on the back seems to be smaller than the deck space given to the unit on the other side. It is unfortunate that there have to be so many stairs.
- I really like the upper balcony on the front and back.
- It is a lovely job. The use of a fairly flat contemporary building material that does not echo the period really bothers me. The opening on the front porch seems narrow. The curving shape of the porch is a strong statement; I am not sure it really helps the building. I like the landscape; it is simple and clear, just be sure that the size is useful.
- The front door needs more creativity; there is an example in Lynn Valley Headwaters Interpretative Centre.
- Are we looking for a building that sits comfortably with historic buildings? I am sorry to see the old building go but it sounds as if it has had its day.
- In the absence of any social significance attached to the building, just because it is old does not mean it is good. If it could be restored, I would be in favour of keeping it. It has informed your approach, but you seem to have a foot in both camps. There is an artful balance between being respectful of heritage and reinterpreting the time and place of where we are now. I get the sense that it is a bit of a heritage reproduction. Heritage buildings are more about mass than planes. It would be much stronger if there was more clarity around the treatment of the front deck and porch. Is the barge board historical? It does not make it a better building and feels irrelevant.
- The gable seems to be awkward in front of the window. The barge board is endearing.
- I am torn about it as so many heritage buildings are being demolished. What you have replaced it with, you have handled very well. The porch jumps out as being unresolved; it could be incorporated into an interior space or the plane could be taken out totally and the stair brought forward. The plane of the barge board for the gable and the fascia of the main roof seems awkward. The use of the Hardie panel is of concern, not being either a heritage replica or a modern interpretation. The simplicity of the forms is generally positive.

Presenter's comments:

- The building is on a draft heritage registry. Two neighbours are very negative about infill housing and strongly opposed to it; they support a duplex.
- The neighbour to the south is not in favour of keeping the building as it is in poor condition.
- The design elements evolved from a lot of discussions with the City staff – e.g. double height veranda, barge boards.

It was regularly moved and seconded Bob/Steve

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 332 East 10th Street and recommends approval subject to the approval, by the Development Planner of the following:

- A reconfigured front entrance to Duplex B;
- Consideration of smooth textured Hardie plank siding in lieu of imitation wood grain.

Carried Unanimously

Karen Kallweit-Graham rejoined the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

7. 351 East 9th Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project which was previously reviewed at the August 17th ADP meeting. The Chair read the ADP resolution.

Randall and Pauline Mitchell, Owner, reviewed the proposed project:

- The roof was changed entirely removing the two small gables and designing a roof with a steep pitch on the front and dormers on either side; the walls were lowered by one ft. This has reduced the massing of the roof considerably
- Details were incorporated around the windows and sills to more closely resemble the windows in the neighbourhood.
- The columns were dressed up.
- The proposed house is very similar to the houses on each side.
- The colour was picked from an existing house on the street.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Are the shed dormers and main gable on the same plane? A: Yes.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- This is a vast improvement over the last project. I appreciate the effort you have made to address our concerns. I like the relaxed appearance of the building. It sits nicely on the site. The big gable helps scale the building and makes it feel more compact. Some suggestions for improvement: give more relief between the flanking walls of the dormer and the gable plane by eliminating the overhang on the dormer part to reveal more of the surface of the gable, consider making the bedroom a step back in plane to push the dormer back further to take it out of the plane with the gable. This would enhance the massing.
- It is really important that the shed dormer be set back or it will appear massive.
- You could set the dormer walls back one foot and project the walls forward one foot. The change needs to be real, otherwise it will feel stuck on and feel very bulky.
- I like the colour palette.
- I am not sure about the privacy between the front two units vis-a-vis the front windows..
- I commend you on a simple elegant scheme, very nicely done.

Presenter's comments:

- Pleased that you like it.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 351 East 9th Street and recommends approval subject to the approval, by the Development Planner, of the following:

- Design development to improve the relationship between the gable form and the shed dormers at the front and rear of the building so that they are no longer in the same plane.

Carried Unanimously

8. 267 – 269 East 4th Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project which was previously reviewed at the August 17th ADP meeting. The Chair read the ADP resolution from August 17th.

Kevin Butler, Kd.B. Design Studio Ltd., reviewed the project and answered concerns raised at the previous ADP meeting:

- The response to the site context: we put a single roof over the side-by-side duplexes to keep the street rhythm. Many of the other buildings have the gable and facade.
- The style of the house: it is more of a vernacular heritage style architecture rather than prairie style. There are hip roof dormers coming from the side to reduce the mass from the street, simple double hung windows, traditional trim and siding.
- Distribution of the building mass: the design has a single gable and the dormer is set back. The rear unit was redesigned to fit within the building envelope by reducing the wall and putting it slightly into the ground.
- Access to the rear yard: the width of the pathways has been increased to five feet and each unit has its own entry trellis; the entrance to unit C has been moved to the corner from the middle.
- The garbage/recycling facilities were moved to the outside to improve access.
- Additional lighting and up lit lighting on some of the maples has been added as well as more landscape features such as planter boxes.
- Reconsideration of the colour palette: bolder colours were chosen.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- In this zone is there an incentive around a heritage approach? Staff: Not if they are not retaining a heritage building.
- Has the landscape plan changed? A: There are trellises for each unit, the width of the pathways has been increased, the rear yards have been opened up due to the relocation of the entry to Unit C, there are more beds around the cedar deck with vegetable and herb gardens, and planters with Maples. There is more lighting down the side yard, and on the coral bark and Japanese maple trees. The side setbacks have been increased to five feet from four feet.
- You are working hard to stay in the envelope for the view sensitive area? A: The maximum height is 25 feet. The house on the left is 34 feet.
- How is it setback and how does it relate to adjacent property? A: Ours is 15 feet and the adjacent building is 8 feet.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- The project has been helped by the refinement you have incorporated. The internal layout seems better. The new look gets a little complicated in places. You should make the gables more solid e.g. by bringing the closets out.
- You have made a lot of improvements; the planning is tight and well-organized. I have issues with the expression; it is better than before but the vernacular approach has resilience and you have stepped beyond the tipping point in terms of the number of elements by including a complex arrangement of familiar parts that I am not convinced hang together. There is a lot going on in the back unit. Maybe you should approach the project historically; look to roots of modernism in L.A. in steeply sloping settings e.g. West Vancouver, California. The pursuit of tradition is not helping you. Bring your strength in planning to the development of the massing.
- I would go back and look at the town homes opposite and see what you can do about the view line restriction. Your building is part of the town home view.
- I prefer the colour scheme. The hip dormers are really big; the massing of the building is problematic for me.
- The composition feels awkward.
- I like the simplifying of the landscape plan. There is no sense of entry into Unit C; it should be improved to make it feel more important.
- I do not think it is that bad. It is a little complex; I do not think it needs a radical rethink.
- The organization on the site has improved. The distribution of the big forms is a positive move, access around the site is positive. There are a lot of moves in the right direction; but you are trying to put a square peg in a round hole and it is not working.
- Vis-a-vis the height and character constraints, certain protrusions into the view corridor may be considered acceptable if it provides a net benefit to the design. There is some clumsy shoehorning of the style into the available envelope. The lane building and the treatment of the garages is clumsy; the roof deck feels uncomfortable and added on.

Presenter's comments:

- Intrusions into the building envelope can be challenged by neighbours. Neighbours have expressed concerns about the view.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 267- 269 East 4th Street and although supporting the site development concept, feels the following have not been adequately resolved:

- Re-examination of the architectural expression to be more responsive to the particular constraints of the site and to simplify the roof lines with particular focus on integrating the roof decks into the building form;
- A reconsideration of the appropriateness of adopting a historical or vernacular approach and/or refinement of the historical or vernacular approach to better suit the site constraints.

The applicant is also requested to provide more site context in future presentations.

**Carried
5 – in favour
1 - opposed**

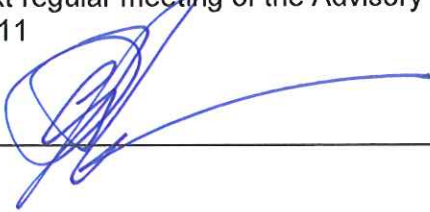
9. **Other Business**

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, October 19th, 2011

Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned above a horizontal line.