

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, June 13th, 2012

MINUTES

Present: B. Curtis (Chair)
J. Jensen
P. McCann
D. Olson
B. Phillips
M. Rahbar
Councillor Bell

Staff: S. Smith, Community Development
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests: **246 East 1st Street**
Kelvin Humenny, Inhabit Modern Dwellings Ltd.
Kent Halex, Halex Architecture
Craig Henderson, Contractor
Dale Wallster, Building owner
2340-2370 Western Avenue
Farzin Yadegari, Farzin Yadegari Architect
Gloria Venczel, Cityscape Design Inc.
David Rose, PD Group
Nic Langroudi, Farzin Yadegari Architect

Absent: H. Goodland
J. Plato
M. Robinson
C. Sacre
Councillor Buchanan

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held May 9th, 2012

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held May 9th, 2012 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

The question was asked whether it was worth giving density bonussing in exchange for rental housing when many condos are rented out. Staff answered that from a policy perspective it ensures that rental condos are secured as the City has no control whether the individual unit owner will choose to rent it out or not, and stratas often put a limit on how many units can be rented. There is quite a high proportion of rental properties in new market buildings but stratas can have an issue with wear and tear on common areas as it can be higher with a lot of renters in the building. Part of the challenge is the City does not have figures on what proportion is being rented.

2. Business Arising

S. Smith told the Commission that the advisory body reorganization update: APC Terms of Reference was postponed. Information will be sent to members in advance of the July 11th meeting when it will be discussed.

The Central Waterfront Report and Existing Buildings Retrofit Framework Report was distributed to members. The Harbourside link was emailed to members.

There will be a Central Waterfront Stakeholders Workshop on July 5th at which APC should be represented. Paul McCann volunteered to attend the workshop. Bill Curtis will attend as a Lower Lonsdale Business Association representative.

3. Staff Update

Projects

Low Level Road: Approval to proceed was deferred to June 18th

211-217 West 1st Street: This project had First Reading on May 28th. A Public Hearing was scheduled for June 18th, 2012.

730 Marine Drive: This project had First Reading on May 28th. A Public Hearing was scheduled for June 18th, 2012.

1835 Lonsdale: This was given the first three readings on May 7th. A Public Meeting was held on May 28th. A covenant will secure three rental units.

642 East 5th Street: A Level B Accessory Coach House was approved at the April 23rd Council meeting.

Harbourside OCP Amendment: On May 28th Council approved a public hearing to be held on June 25th. If the OCP Amendment is approved the owners will be required to enter into a covenant that the following would be provided as part of a subsequent rezoning process: detailed traffic and parking studies, commitment to traffic demand measures, preparation of a Kings Mill Park Plan, utility upgrades, development of a commercial building on the westerly edge of the lands as a buffer to Seaspans, a phasing plan, community amenity calculation based on land values at the time of the OCP amendment, a noise attenuation strategy, confirmation that the lands will not be sold without the purchaser being notified of the obligations contained in the covenant.

OCP Amendment application – 10 Gostick Place (Burrard Yacht Club): A application by the Burrard Yacht Club (BYC) to add residential to their industrial use, which would be sold to another location to raise funds to upgrade their yacht club was rejected at the May 28th Council. The applicant was encouraged to pursue an option for the club that complies with the Regional Growth Strategy to achieve the BYC long-term needs and accommodate the extension of the Spirit Trail through the subject property.

TUP Renewal: On May 28th Council approved a two year extension of the Lions Gate Christian Academy Temporary Use Permit. Property owners may only give one year.

Policies:

Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw: On May 7th approved the exemption of one unit dwellings from the provision of underground power and communication services but required electrical conduit along the foundation side wall to facilitate future underground connection.

Paperless Council Meeting Agenda: Staff were authorized at the April 23rd Council meeting to proceed with the implementation of the “paperless” Council meeting agenda.

North Van City Voices: A delegation spoke at the May 28th Council meeting and expressed concerns on bonussing for amenities, density and pace of growth in the City. A Council workshop on density bonussing will be held. Council wanted City Voices to meet with CityShaping staff; a meeting was scheduled for June 14th. A report will be prepared for Council. This consultation will affect the CityShaping timeline and extend the process probably to January 2013.

Rental Accommodation: On June 11th Council approved convening a public Council Workshop for the purpose of reviewing the current and projected status of rental accommodation in the City and how it ties in with density bonussing. APC may be involved.

Lower Lonsdale Business Association: On June 11th Council approved funding of \$60,000 for the purpose of administrative support for the Lower Lonsdale Business Association in establishing a Business Improvement Area (BIA).

The Chair summarized the process to-date and challenges to establishing a BIA in the past. The association has opted to re-establish the proposed boundaries of the BIA.

4. 246 East 1st Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff reviewed the project which had previously been presented at the March 14th Commission meeting, and read out the motion from that meeting and the motion from the April 18th Advisory Design Panel meeting. The M4 zone permits a small proportion of accessory retail service use to the main industrial uses.

Kent Halex, Halex Architecture, reviewed the response to the APC motion of March 14th:

- The facade has been simplified and the number of materials used reduced. The glazing on the front has been changed to mullioned glass. The stone facing has been removed from the ground floor and replaced with galvanized steel.
- The green roof on the top roof affected the height of the building; it was removed and the herb garden moved down to the second roof.
- The massing was lowered and simplified by removing parapets from the east and west elevation at the second floor and the north elevation at the proposed third floor, reducing the apparent height by three feet. All the railings are glass and have been pushed back.
- All the soffits are wood to give warmth when seen from below.
- The lack of parking has been addressed by the use of an innovative two-storey stacking parking system. The parking variance is now 20% rather than 40%.
- The increased height increases the industrial space and makes it more practical to renovate the building and provide a rear facade that is visually attractive.
- There is a two floor elevator which fulfils code requirements.
- The design includes photo voltaic panels on the top roof. Is it acceptable to the Commission to alter the perceived height of the building?
- The applicant is committed to 80% waste diversion.

Questions from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- What is the square footage of the building? Staff: It is a net gain.
- Is catering one of the planned uses for the interior? A: The catering business will function on the second floor.
- The third floor is office? A: Yes, to support all the businesses.
- Why are there two entrances off 1st Street? A: It exists now. It is two different elevations. Part of the building is under the parking.
- Explain the entrance to the small lobby. A: It is about five feet and the front door; you can go up the stairs to the second floor.

Councillor Bell joined the meeting at 7 pm.

- What is the parking variance? A: There are only 13 parking stalls on the site now; the Bylaw says there should be 19 which is not possible. 15 are being provided; we are asking for a variance of four. The stacking parking system is perfect for the site; the top level is not dependent on the bottom level.
- How high are the solar cells? A: They have to be 45 degrees and are probably between two feet and two feet ten inches.
- Why is the parking system not on both sides? A: Expense is an issue. It is a question of finding a balance between the use and aesthetics. They are wider than usual parking stalls so there would only be five spaces. There also has to be handicapped parking.

Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- I complement you on the creative use of the parking and including the bicycle stalls, as well as the addition of the green elements to soften the hard surface.

- I appreciate keeping the zoning Industrial Commercial Use and not rezoning to Residential.
- You have addressed previous concerns well. The main entrance is not very liveable; there should be a deeper foyer or lobby.
- I support the parking variance. The solution is expensive but a good one. It is to City's benefit to have an example of the system installed.
- The issues of massing and material appearance from the street are well resolved. I like the use of the wood in the soffits. It seems to fit the streetscape.
- I like the front setback.
- The photo voltaic cells on the roof are a good idea; solar hot water would be good as photo voltaic costs more.
- I support non-primary retail with some retail as a result of the commercial business, as street parking and access do not support retail customer flow.
- The facade lacks some character; perhaps extending the canopy would help.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 246 East 1st Street and recommends approval of the project with the following comments:

The Commission commends the applicant for the improved massing of the building and the green elements including the green roof and walls;

The Commission supports the parking variance of four spaces;

The Commission recommends that the proponent and staff examine the use of less costly solar hot water panels versus photo voltaic cells and are confident that the height will be acceptable should they be added to the project; and,

The Commission commends the applicant for a thorough presentation.

Carried Unanimously

There was a short break at 7:15 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 7:25 p.m.

5. 2340-2370 Western Avenue (Rezoning Application)

Staff reviewed the project which is an application to rezone the RS-1 (One-Unit Residential) property to a Comprehensive Development zone to allow 18 townhouse units in three buildings. Staff asked for feedback on the intensity of use, lock-off unit configuration, unique to Level 4 density, onsite amenity space provision and elements of sustainable design/energy commitments. The Western Avenue Study was carried out several years ago to address the transition of densities westward from Lonsdale Avenue.

Gloria Venczel, Cityscape Design Inc. presented the project to the Commission:

- It is a challenging site to make fully accessible as there is a 13 foot drop from the north east corner to the south west corner.
- The site opposite could be rezoned to townhouses.
- The lock-off units provide potential market affordable rental housing; income appropriate housing helps local merchants with staffing needs.
- The main entries to the lock-off units are off the rear lane; each one has a sunken patio.
- The units all have three bedrooms.
- The style echoes the neighbouring project with a different palette.
- The development is close to public transit.

David Rose, PD Group, spoke to the landscape plan:

- There is a bioswale which runs along Western Avenue.
- The overall concept is the use of organic shapes to contrast with the geometry of the building forms.
- The landscape style is West Coast/Japanese fusion using a lot of natural materials, stone and wood, and drought-resistant planting.
- There are interesting grid changes on the slab because of the sloping site.
- Small water features are located at each corner.
- The landscaping is low around the lock-off units to allow light into the sunken patios.
- The configuration of the stairs gives planting space to soften the laneway.

Questions from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- How is the building going to be heating and/or cooled? A: The heating is electrical baseboard; there is no air conditioning. Another member of the design team added that it will connect to Lonsdale Energy if required.
- What is the energy standard? A: Energuide 80.
- Have you considered higher than Energuide 80? A: Our energy consultant recommended Energuide 80.
- The lock-off units look quite deep from the lane? A: It is a challenging site that gets deeper as you go north. The stairs will be as open as possible with open risers and glass panelling.
- Will it be solar ready? A: If we need to be, we will.
- How big are the lock-off units? A: They are 300 sq. ft. studios.
- Staff: The Garden Apartment Guidelines recommend that lock-off units be 250 to 300 sq. ft.
- Do the lock-off units have parking? A: Parking will not be required due to the proximity to public transit.
- Your parking has excess parking but is short on bicycle parking? Staff: 1.5 bicycle stalls per unit is required.
- What consideration has been given to accommodating youth needs? A: We do not feel that they will want to be around the units. The design is meant to accommodate younger children.
- Have you considered asking for a variance to raise the units to the north?

- You are targeting families but do not have play areas? A: Townhouses do not require a dedicated play area; it is difficult to provide that amount of dedicated play area.
- The pathways do not look very bike friendly? A: they should be smooth enough; we are trying to treat it as natural play space with the use of boulders, carving out small spaces within the courtyard.
- Would you consider some social space? A: There are one or two spaces where it is possible. People do not want social space in front of their home.

Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- The site should be densified but it seems too high for the immediate neighbours and the intensity of use; slightly less density would improve the liveability.
- I like the project; it is well-designed – a great complex in terms of architecture and site planning.
- The only weakness in the project is the creation of the social node; with small interventions, there is space to make casual meeting places and create social interaction. I agree with going higher on site coverage if there can be indoor/outdoor amenity space at grade level.
- The liveability of the lock-off units bothers me slightly; I would support an increase in height to give more liveability for the units.
- I have no problem with the size or number of lock-off suites.
- I like the landscape plan: the water features, storm water management and how it softens the massing.
- I have a concern about the number of bike stalls.
- The size of the garbage and recycling facilities should be reviewed.
- I support the density going into the area which is in transition. It is on a major transportation corridor close to the highway.
- If it is family-oriented it should be built accordingly.
- We might want to consider asking for it to be solar-ready.
- I do not support a reduction in parking; there is not enough visitors parking.
- There should be consideration for older children. An advantage is the proximity to the recreation centre and skateboard park.
- Extend the balcony canopies to encourage indoor/outdoor activities.

The presenter responded to the comments by saying that they had taken note of the comments about outdoor space; improving the social spaces was possible. If it were deemed unliveable, the most northerly lock-off unit might be removed. They would work with staff to increase bike parking, garbage and facilities. They thanked the Commission for their comments and insight.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 2340-2370 Western Avenue and recommends approval in principle with the following issues to be resolved to the satisfaction of staff:

- Connection to the Lonsdale Energy system;
- The improvement of energy efficiency to ASHRAE 90.1 (2007);
- The provision of solar ready pre-wiring/piping;

- An increase in the bicycle parking to meet bylaw requirements; and,
- That the size and configuration of the garbage and recycling units be reviewed by staff;
- That staff consider the increased site coverage in light of the lack of indoor or outdoor amenity space;
- That staff review the privacy implications for neighbours on the north side of the property;
- And that the applicant consider extending the roof overhang on the third floor balconies.

Carried unanimously

John Jensen left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Councillor Bell left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

6. Advisory Body Reorganization Update: APC Terms of Reference.

This will be discussed at the July 11th APC meeting.

7. Other

Cityshaping update:

Over the past few months, the CityShaping process has successfully engaged 600 community members at events, focus groups, using workbooks and online forums. Each individual spent between 1 and 2.5 hours providing deep input into critical issues outlined in Stage 2. Staff will report out in a summary of Stage 2 in July.

In May, Council received a delegation from a new community group, City Voices. As a result, staff are tweaking the timeline and the line-up of community engagement activities for Stage 3 which will now start up in the fall. Staff will be seeking Council endorsement of next steps on Stage 3 in July as well.

S. Smith asked members if they had comments on the two reports attached for information; none were forthcoming.

S. Smith reminded the Commission about the grand opening of City Hall on June 23rd.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, July 11th, 2012.

Chair

