

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, April 21, 2010**

MINUTES

Present: T. Cailes
K. Hanvey (Chair)
Y. Khalighi
K. Kristensen
B. Spencer
S. Standfield
C. Taylor
K. Terriss
Councillor Trentadue

Staff: G. Venczel, Development Planner
C. Perry, Supervisor, Engineering Services
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests: Cesar Gentile, Owner, 302 East 12th
John Lopez, Owner, 302 East 12th
Hassan Moayeri MRAIC, MAIBC – Ralii Architects Inc
Sepid Kazemi – Ralii Architects Inc
F. Mark Almazan – Ralii Architects Inc.
Kevin Jardine – Western Canadian Projects Ltd.

Absent: J. Bitar
G. Carlson

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

The Chair introduced Susan Kimm-Jones, the new Committee Clerk, to the meeting.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held March 17, 2010

It was noted that there were two spelling mistakes in the minutes to be corrected, a change to the list of those present and amendments to Panel comments on 221 West Esplanade.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held March 17, 2010 be adopted with changes as discussed.

Unanimously Carried

2. Business Arising

G.Venczel reminded Panel members that good comments should be recorded in the wording of the resolution as this assists applicants.

K. Terriss and K. Hanvey had items to discuss under Other Business

3. Staff Update

G. Venczel gave a brief update on coach housing. More details are available on the City website under "Hot Topics."

4. 302 East 12th Street : Rezoning

K. Hanvey reviewed the previous resolutions from ADP January 20th and APC March 10th, 2010. He asked applicants to focus their presentation on the issues raised previously by ADP and APC.

The applicants, John Lopez and Cesar Gentile, told the Panel that they have addressed a lot of the comments from the previous meetings:

- They have provided more context of the site showing how the house sits on it.
- To create more space, they have taken the roof height down to 26'.
- To address parking issues the duplex has been moved 5 ft nearer to St. Andrews which creates more outdoor space and more of a buffer zone for eastern neighbours.
- The windows on upper level have been changed and are now frosted on the bottom to alleviate privacy concerns.
- The garbage location has been moved to other corner so that it is less visible, more private.
- The garage has been changed to a carport with additional open parking to create more visibility for access into the lane off St. Andrews.
- The rooftop deck on the carport is still in the plan.
- The landscaping is shown in more detail.
- The patio area has been reduced so that the existing house can use the front and have patio space at back.
- There is more outdoor space for the basement.
- The 6 ft fence has been lowered to 3 ft to be more neighbour-friendly.
- They have addressed permeability concerns with the use of stepping stones.
- There is a large outdoor living space for the duplex including an undercover deck area.
- They are using 4 ft paving stones in the entrance from St. Andrews.
- The colours on the duplex have been changed to make it distinct from the existing house.

- External details have been simplified but still maintain the character look.
- There is as much or more green space as contained in the duplexes on either side of the property.
- Trees have been added to the landscape plans for the property.
- There will be signage for bike route on St. Andrews.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Why is the new sidewalk not shown? (A: haven't heard back from Engineering.)
- What is the configuration between the boulevard and sidewalk?
- Are there street trees on the boulevard?
- What is the height of fence on east side adjacent to patios? (A: no fence, low shrubs. There is a 3 ft fence on part of the property.)
- How high is the gate? (A: 3 ft.)
- How many addresses are there at this location? (A: 3, the house will maintain same address and the suite will not have an address.)
- How do you get an address to the basement? (A: you don't).
- The legal requirement for the lot will not change? (A: will get strata plan.)
- What is the access to the roof garden? (A: off bedrooms)
- Is the parking in the carport for the duplex only? How many spaces? (A: two under carport, one either side – 4 total for entire lot.)
- Is there storage for garden equipment? (A: room under the deck.)
- No enclosed garage? (A: Issue last time, enclosed garage creates buffer problem.)
- Are you an architect? (A: They have employed a designer not an architect...should be clarified in documentation.)
- Were you able to ascertain the original character of the existing house? (A: there are photos and original materials in the house e.g. hardwood floor.)
- Is the stucco original? (A: yes, keeping stucco and repainting. Wood and fascia is original and has been sanded and restored.)
- Can you explain the circulation from the basement suite? (A: they will have a walkway and gate, stepping stones; no access from main house.)
- You had to move the parking so you could move the garbage, what is the dimension from the first parking stall to the property line? (A: 10 ft to the beginning of the stall, used to be 15ft.)
- You're not going to do anything to the house? (A: restoring the whole house.)
- Is the basement suite acceptable in terms of bylaws? (A: the window in bedroom has been made larger for fire safety. Applicants have a development permit for the existing house and are already working on it. The current application is for the duplex and how it relates to the heritage house.)
- What is the current view of the council regarding conversion of cellars into basement suites? (A: emergency first responders like to have cellar access as it's hard to go in through windows to get people out. A secondary suite is permitted in a single family house. There are no suites in the duplex)
- What will stop the cellars in the duplex becoming suites? (A: privacy issues, there is no access from the outside, you have to walk through the duplex to access the cellar.)
- Have you considered the weight of the planter on the deck over the parking stalls? Have you considered the issues of drainage/irrigation/cleaning off? Needs to be well-designed

- How are you planning to preserve the existing trees close to the duplex? (A: the trees are holly trees which are considered an invasive plant. APC was more concerned with street visibility and street appeal.)
- With respect to the access to the patio for downstairs suite, how large is it and how wide are the stairs? (A: it is on the lower grade and is 7 ft x 8 ft; there is room for chairs and a bbq. The stairs are 4 ft. wide.)
- What about a more straightforward path for access? It would create more space.
- The location of the path from sidewalk to the house is in an awkward place. (A: it is the existing path, it may be moved over or there may be two paths made of stepping stones: one for suite and one for house.)
- Are you thinking of a new patio on the south side of the existing house? (A: more of a sitting area, fenced in.)
- Is there a raised deck also? (A: no, it is the existing landing to get into house.)

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I like the way the space is planned in terms of the duplex but feel the pathway is too narrow to have a path and planting; would suggest removing planting.
- There are a lot of little broken up spaces. I would not have paving path cutting through green space; it cuts up the space.
- The patios break up the space.
- I like the idea of having two access points and not having to go around on stepping stones
- The tree will block view out into the street and should be removed.
- It seems that the project addresses most of the issues raised.
- There should be greater delineation of outside spaces; the paths seem to wander all over the place. Should move the path to the basement suite in the basement. Duplex space ok.
- Good presentation.
- Generally speaking landscape plan is a little unresolved. It needs improvement.
- The applicant needs to work closely with Engineering to get offsite issues resolved.
- Succeeded generally very well in addressing issues raised.
- New building much improved with new colour palette. Overall whole scheme holds together much better.
- Some concern with planting scheme on the rooftop deck. Will look different once it's braced and could wind up looking awkward: large mass on posts.
- Overall thank you for your resubmission.

Applicant's comments:

- Appreciate comments with regard to landscape two seating areas probably too much. Trying to utilize as much green space as possible.
- Perhaps we may replace the fence with shrubs and post for gate. It needs to be a "friendly" fence as neighbours will have to walk through.
- Planting on deck – will have to take to engineers.
- Thank you, the process has benefited us. We want the purchasers to be happy.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the preliminary rezoning application for 302 East 12th Street and recommends approval. The Panel commends the applicant for the presentation and manner in which previous concerns have been addressed.

AND THAT the Panel further recommends that the applicant address the following issues in consultation with City Staff:

- Further development of the access from St Andrew's to the basement suite including a recommendation for two paths: one leading the tenants directly to their entrance and a separate one leading to the back yard of the existing house;
- Further delineation of the outdoor spaces around the existing building;
- Further consideration of the comfort and usability of outdoor spaces for the basement suite;
- Reconsideration of the patio on the east side of property adjacent to the duplex; ensure a comfortably wide footpath which takes into account its adjacency to the units and social interaction and also the feel of the surface between the duplex and the garbage area; ensure the deck structure can accommodate the proposed planting;
- Consider removing the holly trees at the west yard (in front of the proposed duplex) to improve light access.

Unanimously Carried

There was a short break at 6:35 pm

The meeting recommenced at 6:45 pm

5. 83 Chesterfield Avenue – Rezoning

K. Hanvey read the resolution from the APC meeting of April 14th.

F. Mark Almazan, Architect, reviewed the project which will bring new mixed use to the area. Highlights of the presentation included:

- There is a good mix of buildings in the area.
- Good access to transit hub and seabus.
- There will be minimum shadow-casting impact on neighbours.
- There are no openings across from most openings. There is a planted boulevard between the project and the north neighbour on 1st.
- Access to the parking will be from the lane to reduce congestion.
- There are 6 residential units per floor of which 2/3 will be 2 or 3-bedroom units. Family oriented accommodations.
- The main level will consist of a commercial split level unit, perhaps a café or small restaurant with tables on the sidewalk.
- The residents' entrance is off 1st street.

- There is an open air courtyard for all tenants.
- The project has been sited to all cross ventilation.
- There are large balconies for each unit providing neighbourhood surveillance.
- The commercial space will be concrete and painted medium brown.
- The residences will be painted a light beige.
- The project includes an interesting courtyard which will be finished with natural pavers and contain a water feature.
- There will be planting on the corner of the lane.
- There will be an art installation on the wall paying respect to the heritage aspect of the site.
- The Advisory Planning Commission wanted concrete corner softened.
- Additional commercial space would increase FSR.
- The applicant will be looking for the best way to enhance public interaction with the site.
- It is planned to be energy efficient: ASHRAE 90.1 2007.
- The site will be using LEC. There is the potential to rent out the roof for solar panels for LEC.
- Wood framing will reduce costs which will result in affordability reflected in the rental rates, making it an affordable opportunity for families to move into Lower Lonsdale.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Thank you for the presentation which is well thought out.
- It is the right type of building with more 2-3 bedroom apartments than usual.
- Will it always be rental? (A: the developer is committed to rental house. A covenant can be put in place.)
- How many handicapped-accessible units are there? (A: about 5 which will be Adaptable level 2.)
- What about the site next door? Have there been any approaches to the city? (A: no news.)
- Are there laundries in the suites? (A: there is roughed in electrical for laundry appliances.)
- Is the courtyard open to the lane? (A: to the neighbour.)
- How will you manage the security of the courtyard? Will people be able to climb over from the neighbour into the courtyard? (A: trellis and high fencing so that the courtyard cannot be accessed from outside.)
- Have you done research to see if common courtyards are actually used? Is it useful space? (A (staff): well programmed courtyards are very well-used; it cannot be just passive. Waste of space if not used.) (A (applicant): well-programmed courtyards are very well-used; can't be just passive. Waste of space if not used.)
- Why do you have more parking than required? (A: if the commercial tenant is a restaurant, they will require parking. Most families will require more than one space.)
- How many bikes will the room accommodate? (A: 1 bike per unit.)
- At the moment there is a single story building to the west of the site; what will happen to the courtyard if a tall building is built? What is the maximum height you can build?
- There is no planting except for the courtyard?
- Corridor comes out to 1st; there is no window looking towards 1st? It is a missed opportunity to put a window and get light into the corridor.

- How will the Commercial Unit be serviced as there is no service access? Has it been addressed by City staff? (A (staff): Staff have not reviewed it; it will be difficult to provide a loading zone because of the grade.)
- If the same shape property were to be built next door, would it affect the lot line proportions?
- Is the courtyard in shade most of the time? (A: yes.)
- Why is the courtyard not on the south side to receive more sun? (A: the location of the courtyard provides a guard to prevent wind driven rain because of prevailing winds coming from the east.
- Are there no windows facing out from the corridor to enjoy the green space? What is the size of the courtyard? (A: 35 ft x 52 ft.
- Is the choice of materials driven by budget? (A: yes.)
- Would the solar panels on the roof be visible? (A: no.)
- Is there space on the lane corner to turn it into commercial space? (A: it would be very small as the bicycle storage is behind it.)
- Is there any reason why it couldn't fall within FSR if you increased the commercial space on the lower level?
- The blank wall on Chesterfield is not good.
- Have you anticipated or planned for added passive solar protection on the lane façade facing SW as it will get a lot of sun throughout the year? Have you considered different glazing, sun shades? (A: risk of going over the property line.)
- How many openable windows are there per suite? (A: all windows open for natural ventilation.)

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I really applaud the applicant for putting forth a rental complex.
- The building leaves me a little cold. Would certainly support it for rental.
- Not happy with courtyard; not enough sun.
- Against the wall at the lane.
- The building is very close to the sea. Lower Lonsdale is very cool; the courtyard will be uncomfortable.
- I'm not against the courtyard space, it is not a bad thing for the building, logical location but don't think people will use it. It is going to be an uncomfortable space climatically. You should pick the best use for the space: maybe passive more than active. It won't work well if it is designed to be used by the tenants.
- Commend the idea of mix of rental units, not just one bed units.
- Chesterfield needs to be active and lively; needs more interaction during the day.
- Suggest service access to commercial from lane then elevator to commercial on 1st.
- Would support any increase in FSR to achieve it.
- Building seems monolithic.
- Articulation in form of structure above concrete base but then all painted one colour doesn't optimize the benefit of the design.
- Enclosures around balconies could be lightened up to increase access to light.
- Articulate façade in more detail.
- Should provide window at the end of the corridor by relocating electrical closet.
- You really need to consider the position of courtyard; the SE corner would be a more interesting space and be used more. Blank corridors on that space are a waste.

- Heavy monolithic building; there should be more use of quality materials as used on other Lower Lonsdale developments.
- Choice of beige; how would it age? Would need to be kept clean otherwise could look bad
- It is right across the lane (20 ft) from theatre; even the balcony on SW corner is not going to get much sunlight.
- The project seems to have a lot of bathrooms which are expensive. Reducing the number of bathrooms would result in cost savings which is good for rental housing.
- Interesting building. FSR seems to result in blocky buildings.
- I would like to see a relationship between the courtyard and commercial space.
- Agree a white building will age quickly.
- The accessible suites are one bedroom units which is tight for an adaptable level 2. You might want to adapt some of the larger suites.
- In support of additional FRS to make better use of some of the areas. Better living – especially with the wall.
- North end of courtyard will get sun in June and good light to upper floors.
- Maybe an L-shaped building might have more advantages? Make much better public space for the occupants facing SE.
- I don't mind the expression of the building too much; it does reflect the transition from movie theatre to the more residential character up the hill.
- Still faced with SE corner; would be ideal if it could be retail or public art component e.g. mural wrapped around it, graffiti resistant.
- I would encourage exploration of L shape with courtyard on SE corner.
- The manager's suite occupies an important corner; it could be retail space. The manager's suite could be moved to a less prime corner.
- I'm not too troubled by the location of courtyard if it is used less for tenant activities, e.g. bbqs, and more as a means of providing natural light to the units. Open corridor is good. Largely uninteresting building.
- Difficult site to plan – good job.
- Need to explore how to differentiate upper surfaces with colour, surface texture. Need to explore pattern of reveals e.g. secondary steel detailing insertions into the base material. Still seems dichromatic.
- Support that the façade on 1st avenue should be opened up with glazing; an increased level of animation would add to the project.

Presenter's comments:

- The courtyard is a necessity and uses a small amount of square footage.
- If you move the courtyard you will end up with a wall with no windows.
- The courtyard is more for light, ventilation and greenery, not so much for use by families.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the rezoning application for 83 Chesterfield Avenue and although supporting the site development concept feels the following have not been adequately resolved:

- further development of commercial units along Chesterfield (the Panel would support an increase in FSR to support an increase in commercial on Chesterfield – at the corner of the southern lane and Chesterfield);
- greater delineation and detailing of forms for the upper levels with respect to colour and materiality;
- that the corridor to the upper levels be opened up on the first avenue elevation with glazing;
- Further review of the viability of the courtyard as proposed. The Panel requests that this aspect of the proposal be considered further by the applicant, and the project be re-presented to the Panel with appropriate design criteria supporting the preferred courtyard solution;
- that consideration be given to relationship between the commercial space(s) on Chesterfield and the courtyard;
- that additional texture and other treatments be further developed on the concrete base of the building;
- consideration of the potential for additional commercial space in place of the existing manager's office;
- consideration of solar control on the south façade

Carried
7 – In Favour
1 – Opposed

6. Other Business

*There was a short break at 7:55 pm
Colleen Perry left the meeting.*

There was a short discussion on the emphasis on sustainability and changes in the building code to support it. As solar panels and other projects are encouraged by Government Grants, the Design Panel should expect there to be a tension between the concept of sustainability and urban design, liveability. How will the Panel feel about the visual manifestation of sustainability e.g. wind turbines, solar panels? It will be a design challenge to incorporate such items and they should be designed appropriately and incorporated appropriately as well as being accurately represented. They should be viewed the same way as other insensitive design elements and not given a “free pass” under “sustainability” if they impact the aesthetics of the design.

The Chair asked G. Venczel about the status of the new version of design awards. G. Venczel will look into it.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, May 19, 2010.

Chair

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