

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 29, 2010

MINUTES

- Present:** T. Cailes
K. Hanvey (Chair)
Y. Khalighi
K. Kristensen
B. Spencer
S. Standfield
C. Taylor
K. Terriss
- Staff:** G. Venczel, City Planner
C. Perry, Supervisor, Development Servicing, Engineering Services
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
- Guests:** Augustine Hii
Bill Curtis
Peter Stanley
- Absent:** J. Bitar
Councillor Trentadue
-

A quorum being present, the Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held September 15th, 2010

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held September 15th, 2010 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

None.

3. 420 West Keith (Rezoning)

The Vice-Chair read the resolution from the August 10th APC and September 15th ADP meetings.

G. Venczel gave an overview of the project. The new proposal is an infill type of project with two separate buildings. Several variances are requested: the gross floor area is higher due to the attached garage which is normally excluded in infill type of projects, the lot coverage should be 35% but the applicant is proposing 41% including the garage, both the front and back buildings are one foot over the height envelope, six parking stalls are provided instead of the required eight, the applicant is required to provide secured bike storage for eight bikes and is not proposing any at this time.

Augustine Hii reviewed the project.

- There are two buildings with a central courtyard.
- The density is the same as the previous project: four units with two secondary suites attached to the front unit.
- The front and rear setbacks are 25'.
- The courtyard is generous and will be divided into four quadrants for use by the four main units.
- The front units have three bedrooms and measure about 1200 sq. ft.
- The rear units have two bedrooms and measure about 1000 sq. ft.
- There is an attached garage at the rear.

Kevin Hanvey joined the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

- The rear units have a low profile.
- The height of the screening of the roof decks has been raised on the side.
- The red colour scheme contrasts with the monotone colours of the block.
- The rear buildings have the colour scheme reversed: more beige, less red.
- The cellar units are 600 sq. ft. with one bedroom and a den and are smaller than in the previous design.

David Rose presented the landscape plan.

- Changes to the front improve liveability.
- They have punched through the retaining wall.
- The fence lines in the courtyard are truncated square with the front building to give visual access from the front.
- Accessible from pathways at the side
- Rear of the property – inserted permeable paving into open parking.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- The landscape plan at the front in relation to the porch. A: Half will be covered by the porch.
- Staff: Are there stairs on the public realm? A: They will be behind the property line.
- Why are bike stalls not provided? A: They will be included due to new bylaw.
- Why does the garage roof slope towards the building?

- How does the roof on the tower element work? A: It echoes the plane of the garage roof.
- 25% less parking stalls provided than required; will this cause inconvenience? Staff: reduced parking is supported due to sustainability. Transportation supports reduced parking as long as the project is close to transit; bike facilities will be provided. Street parking may not be a big issue.
- Have you solved the problem of privacy for the basement suites? There are two sets of stairs looking down into the private patio of the cellar units? Is it possible to swing the stairs around more to the side? A: We have tried to maintain the sightline to the rear units and keep the side clear. The guard rail will be screened perhaps with trellis work.
- The width of the side walkway? A: The path is 3ft; the overall setback is 9 ft.
- Have you done a December 21st shadow study? A: No.
- Why are the bathrooms in the lower basement Units A 1&2 located so far away from the bedrooms? A: The bathroom is intended to be the powder room as well; it could be flipped.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I am concerned about the number of variances. I do like the design. Why do we have the rules if they can be relaxed? Staff: This is based on the preliminary plan check and the variances may be reduced.
- If the bathroom was relocated, you could get more light into the units with a window in the kitchen; it looks like you could get a side window in as well.
- The front door leads in the living room; there is nowhere to hang coats.
- The reconfiguration has improved the project. Access and the amount of light getting into the lower units has been addressed and is far more successful. The benefit of two buildings outweighs the negatives associated with infringing. The scale has been reduced from the big bulk of a single building.
- The side paths seem very narrow to get down with a bike and will be dark and scary on a rainy night. It is important that there be outdoor lighting on that space and care taken so that the vegetation doesn't crowd the path; perhaps make the path a foot wider. Take the ease of use of the bike parking seriously.
- Will there be boulevard planting and how will it impact the landscape? You are trying to do a lot in a very tight space; you will need to work to mitigate the crowded feeling.
- The planting between the two buildings, with the fence dividing the space up, would seem more open with less emphasis on tree planting and more trellis and vine planting; more openness would be good.
- Will trees at the front allow for sightlines to the back unit; could they be moved to the boulevard to improve sightlines?
- If you sloped the garage roof away from the building, you could combine the roofs into a simpler roof and reduce the impact of the height of the garage at the lane.
- You have addressed our major concerns. I continue to support the direction of the architecture; each building has its own unique character.
- The cellars are much more habitable.
- There is not enough taupe on the short elevations on the A units transverse returns to make it worth doing.

Applicant's comments:

- The return is in the same colour as the side returns

- That is a good point about the garage roof, and it would solve some of the potential leak problems
- By splitting the building to make shallow units the design allows light in to the cellars and allows for outdoor living to the rear for the front units, with front living space for the cellar units.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the rezoning application for 420 West Keith Road and would like to commend the applicant on the quality of the proposal and the reconfiguration of the site and recommends approval subject to the approval, by the Development Planner of the following:

- that the number of variances be further reviewed;
- that the location of the bathroom in the secondary suites (South units) be reviewed to allow more light into the units;
- that further development of the side yards be undertaken to consider enhanced lighting, wider and more negotiable pathways and bicycle accessibility;
- that the required number of bicycle parking spaces be provided;
- that the applicant reconsider the tree planting in the private rear yards to increase openness and access to natural light in these areas;
- reconsider the planting of the trees at the sides of the lot to allow sightlines to the rear yards;
- consider sloping the mono-pitch garage roof in the opposite direction to simplify roof detailing and to reduce the impact of the garage upon the lane;
- to improve the privacy of the lower unit patios through reconsideration of design of the stair railings.

**Carried
7 – In Favour
1 – Opposed**

There was a short break.

The meeting was called back to order at 6:45 pm

4. 333 Brooksbank (DVP – Signage for Park and Tilford Shopping Centre)

The Chair read the resolution from the September 15th ADP meeting.

Peter Stanley, Pattinson Sign Group, reviewed the proposed signage:

- The depth of the pylon has been increased by 50%.
- The light box has been downsized by 50% and brought into the main sign and is not offset.
- The secondary pylons have been moved back from the corner off the landscape area to be flush with the building so that they do not impact the sightlines for pedestrians and drivers
- They are using the existing footing for the main pylon.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Are there fewer names on the lightbox? A: Yes, just the two main anchor tenants.
- How are the signs lit? A: The cabinet is backlit, the rest is led-illuminated.
- Did you consider giving the brick base more dimension and overhang? A: We have tried to balance the upper and lower parts of the design. It replicates what is within the property; we are using the same brick and perforated mesh.
- Will the brick base have flashing at the top? A: Yes, to prevent water damage.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- You have made a big improvement by reducing the backlit sign. It is still a thin sign; try to work on the detailing of how the brick is used to give it an overhang and shadowing to add dimension.

Presenter's comments:

- I want to thank Barbara Westmacott and Colleen Perry for all their work. The brick will look better than the computer representation.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the DVP and signage application for 333 Brooksbank and recommends approval of the project. The Panel commends the applicant for a thorough presentation and the response to our previous comments. The Panel recommends that more attention be paid to the detailing of the brick base.

Carried unanimously

5. 2010 Design Awards

The terms of reference for the Design Awards were reviewed. As the awards have not been given for about six years, awards can be given to more than one project. The candidates for the 2010 Design Awards were discussed. The winners in each category were:

Townhouse:

236 – 240 (220-224) W 17th – Award of excellence

- Conforms to a very strong set of design principles
- Stands out as the clear winner in this category
- There was some discomfort amongst some jury members that the metal panel was not an appropriate material response for this climate and context

249 w 16 – Award of merit

- The project exhibits a very high standard of landscaping
- All aspects of the project nicely handled
- Overall, this is a high quality project

1640 St Georges – Award of merit

- The project was lauded for the urban place-making and the quality of the streetscape although the "private" facades were judged less successful

- The stone portals are successful and the architectural character, mixing traditional and modern elements, was well-received
- Although the project was commended for the very liveable back yards, overall, it was felt that the landscaping was not up to the high standard of the architecture

Triplex and Infill:

225 E. 17th – Award of excellence

- Strongly and subtly handles the amount of density on the site
- Character of the architecture blending arts & crafts and contemporary elements was judged successful

207 E. 8th – Award of merit

- Wonderful renovation of an existing building
- Added a lot to the neighbourhood
- Landscaping is very strong
- The detailing from the lane is rather pedestrian.

219 West 17th – Award of merit

- Interesting use of the lane; as an infill project it is a very good model for emulation
- The “glass towers” do bring a lot of light into the development
- Provides a refreshing counterbalance to the more traditional forms of development
- However, the project is not equally successful on all sides and some members of the jury were not comfortable with the pedestrian access on the west side

Condominiums:

The Addison – Award of Excellence

- Very handsomely done with an inviting and lovely landscape
- Clever addition of density sensitively surrounding the heritage building
- Would like to see more colour in the project; it is a bit bland

1288 Chesterfield Building – Award of merit

- A great example of a contemporary (and contextual) residential building
- Overall, a very high quality of detailing and resolution
- The handling of the decks is particularly good

Mixed Use:

980 Marine Drive – Award of merit

- Manages to create a welcoming street front and is a good, urban, retail building
- The corners are well-handled
- Legibility of residential entrance a bit of a problem
- The palette of materials is rich and robust

Commercial and Institutional:

City Library – Award of excellence

- A very high quality building which is very successful urbanistically

- The designers took a simple, straightforward approach and executed it very well
- Successful integration of the small commercial space at the ground level
- The passive approach to the environmental agenda including exterior sun shades and the solar array is commendable

180 Esplanade - Boston Pizza – Award of merit

- Negative corner with the upper level terrace is very nice
- Integration of the landscape is successful and we were taken with the vegetative roof given the amount of “overlook” that this site receives
- The material selection and detailing are not universally successful – the roof is nicely formed but inelegantly detailed and the cultured stone is unfortunate
- The treatment of the commercial signage for the financial institution is not well integrated with the design

Urban Design/Landscape:

VISTA – Award of merit

- Mediates well between public space around City Hall while providing high-quality space for the residents
- Integration of playground is successful
- A north-facing space which is shaded by the towers still manages to be a successful landscape

Library Plaza – Award of merit


- The fountains are excellent in relation to the library; there is a sense of seamlessness
- The plaza feels like a theatrical space; passing through one feels like an actor on a stage
- The designers have taken something mundane e.g. entrance to the parking garage and handled it with flair and elegance.
- Appreciate the way you can engage with the water feature
- However, the jury felt that universal accessibility wasn’t as successfully integrated as it could have been

Yashar Khalighi left the meeting at 8 pm

6. Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, October 20th, 2010.



 Chair

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