

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, February 15th, 2017**

MINUTES

- Present:** K. Bracewell, RCMP
B. Checkwitch
B. Harrison
P. Maltby
A. Man-Bourdon
- Staff:** D. Johnson, Development Planner
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
C. Perry, Supervisor, Development Servicing
E. Adin, Deputy Director, Community Development
- Guests:** 504 East 2nd (Development Permit)
Dale Staples, Integra Architecture Inc.
Melvin Lau, Integra Architecture Inc.
Gerry Eckford, eta landscape architecture
Monte Paulsen, Certified Passive House Consultant
Rocky Sethi, Anthem Properties
Jennifer Liu, eta landscape architecture
- 151 East Keith Road (Rezoning Application)
Michael Huggins, Burrowes Huggins Architects
Duff Marris, Burrowes Huggins Architects
David Stoyko, Connect Landscape Architecture
Matt Steyer, Urban Systems
Calvin McCourt, Starlight Investments
Mariano Bocchicchio, Starlight Investments
- Absent:** J. Geluch
A. Sehwoerer
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The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. with B. Harrison in the chair.

1. Minutes of Meetings of the Advisory Design Panel held January 18th, 2017

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held January 18th, 2017 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

None.

3. BC Energy Step Code

E. Adin, Deputy Director, Community Development, presented the BC Energy Step Code which addresses some of the challenges in the Building Act recently passed by the Province. The Act would reduce some authority of local governments to enforce some of their bylaws.

The Step Code is a locally mandated code or alternative compliance path that is more aggressive than the base code, resulting in buildings that achieve higher energy savings. It can be implemented in a variety of ways, but there will be more consistency in requirements for the construction industry as a result.

Questions and comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Why not have the City take a leading role and go straight to Tier 3, make it mandatory?
A: The City is seen as having a leading role e.g. with the Moodyville requirements for energy efficiency, the City is asking for more from developers than any other municipality. We need neighbourhood changes to be palatable.
- Has a savings cost analysis been done for five years? **A:** The problem is the split incentive. Buyers are sometimes not willing to pay 10% more due to the higher construction costs. High energy savings are not so much a problem for rental buildings because the owner can see the payback. It would not be an issue if Metro Vancouver required Tier 3 everywhere, then it would be a level playing field for developers.
- This is a huge step. Good passive design is already Level 2.
- Buyers need to understand how they will recoup the increased purchase price.
- What is the timeline? **A:** It is not yet defined.

4. Staff Update

D. Johnson reviewed the status of ongoing development projects. It was noted that vacancies on the Panel will be filled before the March 15th meeting and that orientation will take place at that meeting.

5. 504 East 2nd Street (Development Permit)

This is a proposal for eight buildings of three to four stories in height containing 56 townhomes including 12 lock-off rental suites. The project is proposed to meet the passive house energy standard and will be among the largest passive house-certified projects in the region.

In addition to assessing the compatibility of the project with the Moodyville Development Permit Guidelines, staff request that the Panel consider:

- Opportunities to differentiate buildings or components of the development to contribute to the sense of incremental development in the area (see Guiding Principles of Moodyville Guidelines);
- Pedestrian circulation through the site, including the potential for a publically accessible mid-block connection (see Guiding Principles and Guideline 9.2.3);

- The feasibility of preserving additional mature trees on the periphery of the site and/or whether the proposed landscape plan includes a sufficient number of conifers to replace the urban forest (see Guideline 9.3.1);
- The proposed parking ratio at 2.0 spaces per unit, which exceeds the recommended maximum of 1.5 per unit in the Guidelines.

Rocky Sethi, Anthem Properties, told the Panel that the large, family-oriented townhomes will be an opportunity for young families to stay on the North Shore. The project is intended to complement their condominium project to the north.

Dale Staples, Integra Architecture Inc., described the project to the Panel:

- The site slopes one storey from the lane to East 2nd Street which gives an opportunity to wrap the buildings over the parkade.
- Moodyville was based on renewable resources, a form of sustainability before it was fashionable.
- The design follows the prescriptive requirements in the Moodyville Guidelines and the qualitative requirements with a strong emphasis on sustainability. The design highlights its North Shore setting using a West Coast Contemporary form with planar and mass elements, large amounts of glazing to connect the indoors to the outdoor elements, and large overhangs. It is important to break the block into smaller units; the varied form emphasizes the front doors which are visible along the street and lane.
- The stepped building form enhances the streetscape and the lane.
- The design creates outdoor spaces for social interaction.
- The pedestrian network is very important with connections from East 3rd Street to East Second Street and east-west connections through the townhouses.
- The lane will have a major upgrade; we are looking at different ways to enhance it.
- Passive house certification will meet sustainability guidelines; the site design is a mix of north-south and east-west oriented buildings to create midblock connections and meet passive house requirements.
- The compact building form balances passive house requirements and good urban design.
- Solar heat gain will be maximized and regulated with the use of large overhangs and roller shades on the south facing units. Thermal bridging will be minimized.
- Patterning of materials will animate the streetscape.
- This is a unique opportunity with the passive house design to establish a new direction as a leader in sustainable living for the “new” Moodyville.

Gerry Eckford, eta landscape architecture, reviewed the landscape plan:

- The landscape design is West Coast modern esthetic and a continuation of the narrative themes from the East 3rd project to the north.
- The Spirit Trail runs along East 2nd Street.
- Ridgeway and St David’s Avenues are steeply sloped.
- There are lots of entry points into the site including a public pedestrian connection.
- A portion of the parkade wall is exposed due to grade changes and will be used to showcase how timber used to be harvested in Moodyville; infill panels will be installed, some with timber in its rough form and others with refined, milled timber. Fences will also play off the heavy timber theme
- Central courtyard areas have different designs to create interest down the central spine, with significant patios, walkways and planters of diverse materials and heights.

- Some existing trees are being retained,
- There will be a combination of pedestrian and children's play areas along the lane.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- What separates the balconies for each unit on the 4th floor? **A:** Secure glass privacy screens about six feet high.
- Are there discussions with the City on the enhanced lane? **A:** Yes; we are looking at special treatment along the south side of the lane e.g. printed concrete, stepped concrete. We may take the history of Moodyville and create concrete boardwalk paving or an historic print on the cement.
- Is there going to be traffic calming on the lane? **Staff:** We have created a handout of guidelines for the lane which talks about traffic calming and landscaping in the lane.
- What is the visual permeability through the site? **A:** You can see through the pedestrian walkways.
- What is the requirement for conifers? **A:** They are part of the guidelines; we are retaining two along Ridgeway Avenue. We will look at opportunities to add more. The landscape plan has four different species of conifers, most prominently along the lane. **Staff:** The Street Tree Master Plan promotes the conservation of existing native conifers and their replacement with similar species.
- What is the light permeability to the parkade? **A:** There is a doorway and a framed opening with infill panels breaking up the concrete façade, which will allow some light through.
- Is there a drawing showing the relationship with the building to the north? **A:** Yes.
- What is the soffit material? **A:** Cement board.
- You have a mid-block connection? **A:** It goes right through our development; we are trying to refine it. We have a concern re privacy issues. It is planned right now.
- Are the perforated wood screens exposed? **A:** They are about a foot deep and stepped back.
- What is the materiality? **A:** Hardiepanel and stained cement fibreboard.
- Can you achieve the cedar look? **A:** Yes, cement fibreboard lasts well and is durable. Cedar siding requires too much maintenance for stratas. It is hard to tell the difference between the real wood and the fibreboard.
- What is the lighting treatment in the courtyard? **A:** Low level bollard lighting with some solar powered lighting.
- How are you going define unit identity for first responders? **A:** It is to be decided; probably through strobe lights.
- Is there real wood at the entries? **A:** No; some of the elements in the landscaping touch points will be locally-sourced reclaimed lumber, in areas that the strata can maintain.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- It is great to see passive house at this scale. Compliments on the landscape design; I am impressed by the parkade element.
- The modern form and esthetic is well done.
- My only comment is there seems to be a very repetitious unit type. In terms of the overall building form some elevations get slightly monotonous. Densifying is not necessarily diversifying. Different units would help break up the form and introduce a slightly different demographic. In general it is a really good project.
- The video flythrough is very helpful. I appreciate the permeability from a pedestrian standpoint and it is very good for people in the back units. It builds a sense of community.

- It is good to make connections through the development with a mid-block connection. There is a fine line between private and public space and it can create uneasiness for residents. You need to look at different design cues to differentiate private and public space. The mid-block connection does not read as public space; it looks private.
- I appreciate the way the frontage wraps all around the block.
- It is nice to see good design in conjunction with passive house.
- There is a lot more articulation in the façade in the street frontage, less on the laneway.
- It is going to be a great contribution to the North Shore, and Moodyville in particular.
- There are lots of eyes on the street. You need to define the territoriality. A robust lighting plan and unit identification are needed; first responders bringing equipment must not get caught in narrow pathways.
- Clear lines of sight through the parkade entrance are important.
- You have to ensure that the landscaping plan does not impede lines of sight on the pedestrian walkway. People need to be able to see.
- You have done a great job and show innovation on a challenging passive house design.
- You show lots of creativity and thoughtful touches in the landscape design.
- The idea of the lane being the passive play area where cars are the intruders using patterning etc. develops a sense of community. It is the perfect opportunity to encourage more use of the outdoor spaces and less car use.
- Look a bit harder at the unit types to give more variety.

Presenter's comments:

Thank you for all the comments. Our second project has unit diversification and will be marketed at the same time as this one. We were reluctant to do passive house at first because of the unknown cost. It has taken more time to design and is perhaps one of the first townhouse multifamily passive house projects. We can make sense of the numbers and it will go a long way towards industry buying into more passive house development. We did not want to deliver blocky passive house design. There are three unit types: three and four bedrooms, some with lock off units. There is a subtle variety, although they are on the larger side. We are serving a ground-oriented market.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Development Permit for 504 East 2nd Street and recommends approval of the project and refers the applicant to staff for comments. The Panel commends the applicant for the quality of the proposal and their presentation.

Carried Unanimously

K. Bracewell left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

6. 151 East Keith Road (Rezoning Application)

This is a rezoning application for 151 East Keith Road. The application proposes four infill buildings containing a total of 43 rental units to help the applicant achieve their potential density bonus. The additional units are to be placed on top of the existing parking structure. The current tower is not a part of this application and no improvements or modifications are proposed.

Staff asked for the Panel's input on:

- The proposed site design including the location of the recycling/garbage and bicycle enclosure;
- The proposed architecture of the buildings, in particular the appearance of the west elevation in buildings 1 and 2; and
- The proposed landscaping plan, in particular the wayfinding to the north units of building 2.

Matt Steyer, Urban Systems, told the Panel that the 43 units will be 100% rental and a mixture of townhouses and studio suites which will complement the existing building which is mostly one and two bedrooms. The proposal would use an underutilized portion of the site.

Michael Huggins, Burrowes Huggins Architects., outlined the project to the Panel:

- It is challenging to build infill buildings on the site.
- The existing building is a typical form of the era with a large relatively unused parking podium at grade. The parkade was designed to accommodate 3-4 feet of landscaping which is tired and outdated.
- Setbacks have been pushed to keep good spaces between the buildings and recognize the context of the site. The buildings are separated by the courtyard.
- The units look away from the neighbouring buildings.
- The massing steps to the south and lets sun into the courtyard.
- The architecture is contemporary using a mixture of Hardie 2.00 and wood.
- Urban infill densification is sustainable; the proposal uses unused space on the parking podium.
- There will be a combination extensive / intensive green roof on Building 1.
- We will do a little more work on the west elevation; the neighbours are concerned about privacy. Perhaps we will use high level translucent windows.
- A pathway has been added through the site for the residents of the building; it will not be gated.
- Headroom in the parkade is challenging so an annex will be built to hold the bicycles and garbage.

David Stoyko, Connect Landscape Architecture, reviewed the landscape plan:

- The current building is a hidden internal space; the design creates little yards for a nice street presence.
- The pathways create a central garden space and seating nodes, stringing spaces to allow a lot of people to use it at the same time.
- It is a good upgrade of a tired 70's project.
- Drought tolerant plants are included in the design.

The panel examined the model.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Have you looked at the landscaping of the neighbouring building being constructed? **A:** Yes; our office is working on it so we have designed some connections.
- Have you included street trees in the plan? **A:** No, but we can.
- Who is the owner? **A:** Starlight owns the tower and is developing the area around it.

- Are the solid walls on the buildings because of privacy? Building 1 has a solid east elevation; you have a lot of solid wall. **A:** There could be some design development. We would look at the end walls of buildings 1 and 3; they could accommodate more glazing. Regarding the west elevation, we are concerned about the neighbours. Building 3 could have some additional windows. We have some very tight spaces. The units are very narrow and setbacks are pushed to the limit. There could be a window in the stairwell.
- No additional parking is being added? **A:** The requirement is 0.75. **Staff:** A variance request down to .70 is being made; the Engineering Department is looking into it.
- Why is there a switchback stair in Building 1? **A:** There needs to be two exits from each floor area. We could not put a unit on the corner so put the stairwell there as a decorative feature. It is convenient to the elevator and follows the Active Design Guidelines.
- What about seismic upgrades; there have been changes since 1975? **A:** The construction of wood frame buildings has about the same vertical loads as the original landscape. It is not making the tower any worse. We are working with Building Code consultants to look at the addition of the elevator to the parkade.
- The annex building is a long way for people to travel to for garbage; could there be a collection area for each of the buildings? **A:** We would lose parking stalls. It has been thought about; we feel it is reasonable with quite a quick and straightforward path. We are trying not to interfere in the current tower for seismic issues.
- The walkway from East Keith Street to East 6th Street comes across at an angle in the south and cuts against the easterly town home in Building 2, could the path be moved out to give them more room? **A:** Yes, we could put in a little more separation.
- I like the idea of the building on East 6th Street; is it possible to extend it to the east to the parkade to increase the size? **A:** We have to revamp the electrical design. If there is a need to, we could, but we have enough space; the garbage meets the new guidelines, and there is enough space for bikes.
- Is there considerable difference between existing setbacks and what is proposed? **Staff:** Yes. It is up to Council whether to approve the setbacks.
- What is the implication of breaking the setback? Can other buildings along East Keith Road make similar applications? What precedent does it set? **Staff:** There is not much opportunity for neighbouring sites to do the same thing.
- Is it an improved condition from the large concrete slab which exists now? **A:** Yes.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- The blank walls need design relief. It will be hard for residents to look at blank walls.
- Could you make space for electric bikes, scooters etc.? I would like to see plug-ins for electric bikes or scooters in the annex.
- Setbacks have been cut back. I think the west setback Building 1 was 25 feet and is being reduced to 10 feet; you should have positive feedback from neighbours to do this.
- In Building 1 (Drawing 3.03) if you took the right hand unit and pulled it back, you could improve the through access which might improve the setback.
- As an infill project it has been done in a very interesting way and will be a real contribution to the community.
- Unit 101 in Building 1 is creating a pinch point; it would be good to have visual permeability from the street through the site.
- I appreciate the project; it is taking an outdated model of housing and making better use of the land, especially as it is across from a park.
- I like the townhomes on the street frontage; they have a good relationship with the street and park. It is better than just towers.

- The existing rental tower is looking down on greenscape on one of the roofs; look at the other roof tops and do something to enhance their experience. Different colours of gravel for instance. It is good to have a green roof on the one unit.
- The way you have infilled around the tower is good. I think that we are allowing this building owner to do something which is not really in the zoning. There should be a reciprocal exchange with the community. There should be something giving back to the community; maybe making the spaces more public or park improvements. The setbacks are aggressive and neighbours to the east and west need to be satisfied.
- The design of the project: architecture and landscape plan are done very well within the scope of the project.
- Use glazing to bring light in to the buildings.
- Building 1 should be moved west to allow circulation on the outside for visual permeability through the site and give light to the stairwell.
- I am very supportive of rental housing and the rental housing component. Giveback to the community is a big one, maybe in the form of public art; there is a great opportunity with Victoria Park.

Presenter's comments:

Thank you for your comments; they are very insightful. We will take them all under consideration.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 151 East Keith Road and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner:

- Wall articulation, especially the west side of Building 1;
- Consideration of extending Building 4 for additional bike storage and plug ins for electric bikes and scooters;
- Review of the east end of Building 1 to improve visual permeability through the site;
- Review adjusting the north south pathway to increase the separation along Building 2; and
- Roof top treatments to all infill buildings.

The Panel further suggests that the proposal be reviewed by the Planning Commission and that the applicant thinks about giving to the community, perhaps with public art, to mitigate the impact on adjacent buildings.

The Panel wishes to thank the applicant for the quality of their presentation.

Carried Unanimously

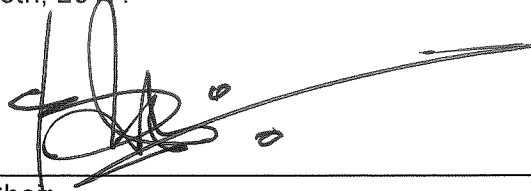
7. Other Business

None.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, March 15th, 2017.



Chair

