

Summary Report on Public Comments Regarding Subdivision Application at 822 E 4th Street

Public Input Period: A site sign was placed and maintained for the mandated public input period of 4 weeks, allowing community members to review and comment on the proposed subdivision application at 822 E 4th Street.

Summary of Comments Received:

1. Concern about Building Height and Views:

- **Resident Feedback:** Multiple residents expressed concerns that the proposed development, despite being permitted for "two stories," actually plans for three stories, including an above-ground basement suite. This height discrepancy is perceived to negatively impact views and exceed the height of neighboring buildings. The development should not exceed the height of adjacent properties.
- **Architect Response:** The zoning bylaw and building height calculation in the City of Vancouver were revised to allow better daylight in basements. The proposed west building's first storey is only 0.44 meters higher than the minimum allowed height in the zoning bylaw, and we matched the east lot building height to the west. This slight increase is within permissible limits and designed to enhance natural light.

2. Neighborhood Compatibility and Density:

- **Resident Feedback:** Residents pointed out that the 800 block of East 4th Street to East 7th Street does not currently have any duplexes or two houses on the same property. There is concern that the new development does not fit the character of the neighborhood and prioritizes developer profit over community interests. The introduction of a duplex is seen as inconsistent with the existing single-family homes in the area.
- **Architect Response:** The proposed development offers affordable, small-scale housing for families. In single-family developments, the majority of property value lies in the land. Subdivision reduces property lot values by 50% compared to full-lot development, making housing more affordable and accessible for families.

3. Traffic and Parking Concerns:

- **Resident Feedback:** The potential increase in vehicles due to legal suites in basements, and the addition of two garages and two carports, raises concerns about increased traffic in the back alley and parking congestion. The development could significantly add to neighborhood traffic and parking issues.
- **Architect Response:** The proposed development includes two off-street parking spaces, compliant with the zoning bylaw. A common issue in single-family developments is the use of garages for storage, leading to

cars being parked on the street. We have addressed this by proposing large dedicated storage spaces below each accessory parking area, encouraging residents to use the provided off-street parking. Additionally, we do not anticipate secondary site tenants will heavily rely on personal vehicles due to the immediate access to rapid bus and public transit services.

4. Historical and Community Value:

- **Resident Feedback:** Some residents highlighted the historical significance of the existing house and its contribution to the community's character. There is a sentimental attachment to the property, with mentions of a long-term resident who built and lived in the house since 1957. Preserving the existing structure maintains the neighborhood's historical and community value.
- **Architect Response:** Preserving the neighborhood form and character is a key consideration in new developments. The existing building does not have a recognizable architectural style that significantly impacts the neighborhood's form and character. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with the community's aesthetic standards while introducing modern and sustainable housing solutions.

5. Affordable Housing and Sustainability:

- **Resident Feedback:** The existing house serves as an affordable rental for a large family, and its demolition could displace low-income residents. Additionally, there are concerns about the sustainability and environmental impact of demolishing a structurally sound house. Repurposing the current structure could address the need for affordable, multigenerational housing while promoting community sustainability.
- **Architect Response:** The current building's low rent is due to its low quality and poor living conditions, which do not cover the new owner's mortgage. This situation could lead to owner bankruptcy and forced foreclosure of the property. Our development aims to provide high-quality, affordable housing that is financially sustainable for owners and beneficial for the community.

6. Aesthetic and Architectural Concerns:

- **Resident Feedback:** The proposed duplex structures are described as "tall square boxes" that are aesthetically displeasing and do not blend with the existing neighborhood architecture. There is a fear of the development becoming an "eye sore." The architectural design should harmonize with the existing neighborhood, potentially through single-family homes with lane carriage homes.
- **Architect Response:** The narrow building width is a natural result of the 50-foot lot subdivision. All new developments undergo review by the planning department and consultation with the advisory design panel if required. This ensures that the architectural design meets community standards and enhances the neighborhood's aesthetic appeal.

7. Zoning and Compliance Issues:

- **Resident Feedback:** The proposed zoning change from RS-1 to RS-2 is seen as a fast-paced adjustment favoring developers. There is also concern about the developer's track record of seeking variances post-construction. The city should maintain RS-1 zoning to preserve neighborhood integrity and ensure compliance with community plans.
- **Architect Response:** The proposed subdivision complies with the City of North Vancouver's Official Community Plan (OCP) and policies. It provides opportunities for younger generations to become homeowners. RS-1 development could potentially force current residents out of the neighborhood, quickly substituting them with a high-income community, contrary to our goal of maintaining diversity and affordability.

No Name Comments:

- **Resident Feedback:** Two comments were received without contact details, both expressing disapproval of the proposal. One emphasized that the development would displace low-income adults, while the other simply suggested rejecting the proposal without further elaboration.
- **Architect Response:** Comments without names lack credibility and are often repetitive submissions from individuals who have already provided feedback. These comments are considered less valuable in the overall assessment.

Architect Conclusion

The proposed subdivision at 822 E 4th Street aims to balance community concerns with the need for modern, affordable housing. By adhering to zoning bylaws, providing adequate parking solutions, and considering neighborhood aesthetics, the development is designed to enhance the quality of life for new and existing residents. While maintaining historical and community values, the project also addresses sustainability and affordability, ensuring long-term community stability and inclusivity.