

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, March 16th, 2016**

MINUTES

- Present:** K. Bracewell, RCMP
J. Boyce
B. Checkwitch
K. England
J. Geluch
S. Gushe
P. Maltby
A. Man-Bourdon
- Staff:** D. Johnson, Development Planner
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
C. Perry, Supervisor, Development Servicing
- Guests:** 367 East 8th Street
Tina Hubert, Tina Hubert Architect
Lucia Sakhrani, DESIGNSTUDIO8
Hong Bing Chen, Forma Design Inc.
Ron Smith, Forma Design Inc.
- Absent:** B. Harrison
A. Sehwoerer
-

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held January 20th, 2016

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held February 17th, 2016 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Staff Update

D. Johnson reviewed the status of ongoing development projects.

3. Business Arising

None.

J. Geluch declared a conflict of interest due to a pecuniary interest in the project to be reviewed and left the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

4. 367 East 8th Street (Rezoning Application)

This is a development application to rezone the lot from Two-Unit Residential 1A Zone to allow for the subdivision of the property into two lots to support a single family house plus coach house on the interior lot and a detached duplex with a detached garage on the eastern lot. The City considers this a three unit development. All units have roof top decks.

Staff asked for comments from the Panel on the proposed lot widths relative to proximate lots, the detached duplex proposal, the potential for overlook from roof decks, the type and quality of exterior finishes and colours specifically on the western elevations of the principal buildings, the storm water management plan and proposed landscaping plans, and the quality of private at-grade outdoor space.

Tina Hubert, Tina Hubert Architect, described the project to the Panel:

- The size of the new lots is approximately 33 feet x 146 feet.
- The corner lot is broken up into two units to duplicate the street rhythm, and each unit is approximately 1800 sq. ft. and has two stories with a basement and roof top deck.
- The design uses horizontal and vertical elements with brick, wood and stone materials.
- Overhangs provide privacy and protection from solar gain.

Ron Smith, Forma Design Inc., reviewed the landscape plan:

- The design response is based on circulation and the need to separate areas using formal and informal dividers with hedges and an open screen system. The screens are six feet high and are open at the bottom for vines to grow. The top of the screen, at eye level, will be wood to match the wood on the building and act as a privacy barrier. The panels are adjustable according to where they are placed e.g. on the edges of the patios.
- The roof deck has been pulled away from the edge and has bamboo in pots at the edge for privacy.
- The garage has a green roof planted with sedum.
- Each unit has a garden for storm water management.
- The design includes a creek element on the eastern lot to capture rain water. Weirs with floating bridges cross the creek to access the residential units.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Is there stone on elevation #2? **A:** It will be stone or brick; we would prefer brick as it relates better to the context.
- What is the soffit? **A:** It is a wood grain panel. It will look like cedar.
- There do not seem to be many native plants in the landscape scheme?
- Where are the rain barrels? **A:** They are on the roof decks.
- Do the barrels just collect the rain from the roof? **A:** Yes.
- What is the permeable paving? **A:** Poured slabs with gaps between them.
- What amenities are there? **A:** There is a bench on the corner. **Staff:** We are not asking for extra amenities.

- Was there a calculation done for storm water management e.g. the volume to be captured? **A:** No, the calculations will be prepared prior to building permit.
- How are you meeting the grade to the west? **A:** The plan follows the natural curve of the land. There will be a small green planted retaining wall with a soft edge.
- It is hard to tell which unit has what outdoor space? **A:** The single house has a planted front yard.
- What is Built Green Platinum? **A:** It includes measures such as high performance insulation. We will be asking for an exclusion for thicker insulation. The project will probably go beyond EnerGuide 86.
- What recycled content will you be using? Per the Sustainability Statement on page 3? **A:** It will be mainly the interior materials e.g. countertops with 40% recycled materials.
- To staff: Are there any limitations on how much storm water can flow to City drains? **Staff:** They have to meet our standards; we will be looking at the strategy, location, and size. Their contractor will confirm volume capture.
- The grade drop on the bioswale is not very deep at the bridge crossings; what will you do to stop people going into the creek? **A:** We will use planting to inhibit entry. The drop is about three feet on the outside, two and half feet next to the building. The creek walls will be made of landscape green bags with rocks for texture and interest.
- Is parking allocation set? **A:** Yes.
- Is there no entry for the duplex unit off 8th Street? **A:** Correct. The design repeats the rhythm of the street. The grading works better from Ridgeway Avenue. It is similar to what is happening around it on Ridgeway.
- How high is the screen on Ridgeway Avenue? **A:** Six feet from the deck height on top of the swale. Vines will be planted below the deck to grow on to the screen.
- How will emergency responders recognize the houses? **Staff:** The interior lot will have one address; the coach house will be xx-2. The eastern side will have two independent addresses.
- How are you defining the territoriality to stop people cutting through? **A:** With a gate.
- Did you consider access doors to the roof decks with a lower profile or having a hatch? **A:** We really want residents to have proper access; the roofs are quite programmed and it will be easier to bring things up to the deck.
- What is the material on the wall on Elevation Sheet 6? **A:** It is stone or brick wall cladding.
- I am surprised that the project is so dense with three homes being built. Can the City comment on it? **Staff:** This process is for a review of the density. Under current zoning the maximum density is 0.45 FSR; the applicant is proposing 0.50 FSR. It is not significant, but is still an ask. The total density is spread over four buildings. Staff support continuing the street rhythm. We would be getting smaller units which could be more affordable with an above-grade rental in the form of a coach house.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Ensure territoriality is well-defined and make sure units are clearly identified for first responders.
- It is a well put together package. Good contextual review. I appreciate the care with regard to the screening; it is a softer approach, nice.
- I appreciate the rain gardens. A lot of the outdoor spaces will not be usable; it makes sense to use them as rain gardens.
- I think you have managed to densify quite adroitly. Although the designers have done it very well, I would hope that any further project trying to achieve this number of buildings on this type of site would do so with care.

- I am struggling with the density and the quality of private at-grade space. I do not have an issue with the subdivision. Four buildings seem like a lot. The lot on Ridgeway Avenue is overtaxed. The buildings seem like apartments with almost no usable outdoor space, only a deck and garage roof. I do not know where the children will go out and play. The space along 8th Street could be common space for people to use. Try to reconsider how the landscaping is approached to provide something for children.
- I wonder about the two duplexes being detached? You are spacing a lot of density along the lot. The interstitial spaces are not very useful. The duplex by the garage has no usable space; if you moved it over and attached the buildings; you could get more space.
- The exterior materials and colours are fine. The design is very nicely done.
- I have no problem with the lot width; you have done an excellent job with the screening.
- The overlook from decks has been addressed well. Storm water management is good.
- It is a lot of density with not much space left over for usable outdoor space. Perhaps one of the duplexes could be smaller to provide more usable outdoor space. The school yard across the way is a help. It would be nice if there was more room on the site to play.
- Is there any appetite to limb up the trees on East 8th for more usable space? They are a constraint at the moment.
- Can something be done with the west elevation of the single family residence? It looks really stark, otherwise I think the buildings are great.
- Two smaller lots are fine; we need to use our residential lots well to increase density. This is a good example of what can be done.
- I really like the idea of the roof decks. Re overlook; people will find a way to create their own privacy. You have done a good job on it.
- Putting the laundry upstairs might be a useful thing to do. I really like the quality of the project. The at-grade spaces are tastefully handled.
- I like the material palette; it is well thought out. In terms of the cedar, it needs to be treated properly.
- The roof access splits up the space but residents will probably get more use out of it.
- Regarding density, there are lots of smaller units being built in towers. I like the contrast in density being done on a single family lot. You are giving people a ground-oriented lot. The neighbouring duplex is large with no permeability. People in apartments use parks. It is similar to living in a tower with a ground floor approach. The execution has been done well. I do not have an issue with the lack of private yard space. You make the City and parks your back yard. It gives people more connection the outdoors than in a tower. I like it because it is different.

Presenter's comments:

We will pay attention to the cedar; I have lived in a LEED project and the stain failed in six months. You can do quite a bit with a small outdoor space. The patios are quite big.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 367 East 8th Street and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner. The Panel wishes to thank the applicant for the quality of their presentation and package.

- Territoriality to be well defined between units;

- Ensure clarity for first responders' access to the units through signage and lighting of pathways;
- Review the benefit of the rain barrels on the roof; it may function better to give this space back as usable roof deck;
- Review of the extent of the current planting at-grade to look for opportunities to increase the private at-grade space for each unit;
- Review the opportunity to turn some of the proposed planting into plantable gardens for the units;
- Review the west elevation of the single family home facing west to create more interest;
- Review the treatment of the cedar material to ensure its durability; and
- Include more native plant material in the landscape plan to align with the applicant's Sustainable Development Guidelines checklist.

The Panel suggests that the applicant talk to City staff about limbing up the trees on East 8th Street to provide more usable outdoor space.

The Panel found the subdivision to be successful in how the density is addressed. The design is well-executed for what they are trying to achieve, however, the Panel feels this application should not be used as a precedent for future projects unless they are of high quality.

Finally, The Panel appreciates the use of roof decks as additional outdoor space and has no issues with overlook.

Carried Unanimously

Joe Geluch rejoined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

5. Submission and Presentation Guidelines and Checklist

D. Johnson asked members to review the proposed changes to the guidelines and checklist, which is used to help applicants craft presentations to ADP. Discussion ensued. The suggestions will be incorporated into the draft and brought to the April 20th Panel meeting for further discussion and/or approval.

6. Other Business

The Volunteer Appreciation Reception which will be on April 19th at 6:00 pm at City Hall.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, April 20th, 2016.

Chair



