

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel
Held via WebEx on Wednesday, June 16th, 2021**

MINUTES

Present:

N. Petrie
S. Mitchell
K. Ross
M. Rahbar
K. Blomkamp
K. Bracewell, RCMP
Councillor A. Girard

Staff:

D. Johnson, Planner
R. Fish, Committee Clerk
M. Wray, Planner
E. Macdonald, Planner

Guests:

273-275 East 8th Street (Rezoning Application)

Brenda Shaw, Brenda Holdings Ltd.
Jordan Kutev, Jordan Kutev Architect Inc.
Daryl Tyake, ETA Landscape Architecture

818 West 15th Street (Rezoning Application)

Cam Halkier, SHIFT Architecture
Shadi Jianfar, SHIFT Architecture
Marina Rommel, Connect Landscape Architecture
Rene Rose, Polygon Homes
Lorne Wolinsky, Polygon Homes
Jacqueline Garvin, Polygon Homes

Zoning Bylaw Amendment to Enclose Private Balconies

Gary Penway, Penway Consulting
Michael Geller, The Geller Group

Guests

Brad Hod, Member of the Public
Kyle Robertson, Member of the Public
Andrew Eagan, Member of the Public

Absent:

M. Messer
M. Muljiani
M. Tashakor
D. Burns

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meetings of the Advisory Design Panel held May 19th, 2021

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held May 19th, 2021 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

None.

3. Staff Update

None.

4. 273-275 East 8th Street (Rezoning Application)

The City has received a rezoning application at the above noted address to permit a two-unit rear infill building, over an underground parkade. There is an existing duplex with suites at the front of the site. Therefore, the proposal would result in a total of six units (including suites) on the lot.

The subject site is located near the intersection of St. Andrews Avenue and East 8th Street. The area consists of mainly duplexes, triplexes and townhouses.

The subject site has an OCP designation of Residential Level 4A, which permits townhouses and four-plexes to a maximum floor area of 1.0 FSR.

Staff would like to receive feedback on the proposal with respect to the following:

- CPTED and emergency access;
- The parkade layout/design as it relates to side yard setbacks;
- Proposed materials;
- Rooftop deck design and overlook;
- Proposed planting plan and outdoor space privacy;
- Parklet design as it relates to the private/public interface and face of the parkade.

Brenda Shaw, Brenda Holdings Ltd., described the project to the Panel:

- The lot slopes quite a bit from front to back.
- Built to Step 3 of the Step Code.
- Storm detention tank below parkade ramp.
- All lighting will be LED.
- Electric car charging stations at each parking space.
- Market townhouses suitable for families.
- Underground parking is secured, entries on both sides and residences are clearly demarked by two separate gates.
- Very sunny site, won't impact neighbours with shade on adjacent buildings.
- Roofdecks will have exceptional views.
- All Hardie plank siding and Hardie trims.
- Pre-treated wood posts and trim.

- Black aluminum railings.
- Access for fire trucks is very good.
- Parkade includes six stalls with mechanical and electrical, storage lockers, recycling and garbage area.

Daryl Tyake, ETA Landscape Architecture Inc., reviewed the landscape plan:

- Lots of lighting to provide access and safety.

The Panel took a vote to have the members of the public address the Panel and speak to the application. The Panel vote was carried, 4 for and 2 opposed.

Kyle Robertson, a neighbor to the west of the property provided the following comments:

- Concern with the allowable height and density.
- Shadow study only includes up to 2PM.
- The density doesn't provide any benefit to the community.
- The property would be much more suited to infill a coach house.
- Concerned about the proximity to the property line and parkade entrance.
- Homes in the area are old and at risk of damage.
- The location of the garage door is next to a primary bedroom.
- If application is approved, consider amending the development to move the parkade to the west side.
- Rooftop decks will affect the privacy of my home.
- The south dwelling has three windows and only one was shown, windows on second home on the property were not outlined.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Is the parkade not extending below the existing building? **A:** The back wall of the parkade is exactly where the back wall of the patio area is of the current four-plex. The patio of the lower units will remain the same size or a foot less, basically the parkade does not impact the existing building at all.
- What about on-grade parking? **A:** I applied to the City with on-grade parking years ago and was denied. The parkade barely works. I looked at moving the garage door to the other side but the lane slopes two feet. The ramp is already at the maximum and the turning radius is as tight as it can go.
- To staff: Is the Bylaw requiring parking to go underground? **A:** The property is going through rezoning, there's a possibility to vary the standard in the zoning Bylaw. The standard is six parking stalls which is being provided.
- Do the pathways go through either side of the property from 8th to the lane? **A:** Yes.
- How will you direct first responders to residents at the rear? **A:** Mailboxes and signage.
- Will mailboxes will be sufficient when it's dark and raining? **A:** We could light up the signage.
- Did you consider designing something more subtle and with the scale of the southern house, it's difficult to digest. **A:** We wanted to build something to be proud of. The existing building is a San Francisco style of building architecture. We are trying to make it look like the front because it's been well received.

- In terms of architecture, massing and scale of the rear unit, why do exactly the same as the front with the height, roof, detailing and scale, why not consider a different architecture to marry with the front on a more subtle scale? **A:** The parkade will be expensive, we need as much floor space as possible. We are not maxed out on FSR. It doesn't make sense to build only one floor with an underground parkade.
- The walkway along the west enters to the unit to the rear of it. Won't the stairs coming from the garage to the courtyard lack privacy with going in and out? **A:** A bit, yes. Those coming out of the parkade will go straight ahead, entering into their unit or using the stairs from the other side.
- Did you consider other materials for the base of the building? **A:** I like the look of concrete if it's done well. With mature landscaping you won't see a lot of it.
- How will people get to the front door from the street? **A:** The sidewalks go all the way across to the back units on both sides of the site.
- There's no direct path to the lane? **A:** Correct.
- Are double fire exits required for the parkade? **A:** Yes, it's a code requirement.
- Will you be retaining ownership and continue to rent and keep ownership of the additional strata units? **A:** We will stratify the whole site. The existing building would be two units with legal secondary suites. I will probably sell the two new units and keep the existing four as rental.
- Will all four strata lots have access to the parkade? **A:** Yes.
- Are these common property patios or limited property patios? **A:** Considered common property like a typical strata. Most outdoors are considered common property.
- There is a significant amount of massing that affects those houses, it's hard to get the visual from what is provided. **A:** The other house faces the courtyard area and is not impacted at all. It is not looking into the windows.
- To staff: the Bylaw allow for 35% coverage and the proposal is 50%, how common is it to see a four plex strata at 50%? **A:** 35% lot coverage is standard for a duplex. We used base zoning for this property because we don't have a standard zone for four plexes. For an infill building like this, it's not uncommon.
- The FSR being proposed is not inclusive of parkade, what is it with the parkade? **A:** Can't answer that now. It is under the FSR for liveable space.
- Can you confirm for allowable rear and side setbacks, what they are per the Bylaw and what's being proposed? **A:** Not at the standard 45.5 rear setback, 7.3 rear setback would be appropriate for this infill development and the side yard setback is complicate. The zoning Bylaw allows for any structure like this to be exempt from setback requirements.
- Did the information session get feedback and comments? **A:** Yes.
- Concerned about the loss of privacy and backyard space, should application move forward, how will this affect their tenancy agreement and rental rates to reflect the loss of space? **A:** They currently pay rent at 40% less than market rates.
- How did you come to the size of the footprint of the proposed infill? **A:** The City rejected parking on grade. If it's reduced at all it won't work.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Parkade will be complicated and tight as is.
- There are ways to deal with privacy concerns on the roof decks based on where you place railings.
- Height variance is minimal.

- Ensure robust identification system for first responders and a clear pathway through to the rear. Ensure easily identifiable and visible.
- The massing is too much.
- The architecture could have been a different massing and style to compensate or compensate for the loss of privacy and massing.
- Major circulation problem.
- The path from 8th Street to the front unit is not clear.
- Lot coverage is too much for the site.
- Lane activation will be good but architecturally there are a lot of problems to solve.
- The landscape needs to provide a direct route from the street to the projects front door of laneway units.
- The architecture of the building feels tall in the backyard partly due to the style, having a roof on top and stairway makes it higher.
- The parkade wall is not treated well. The driveway ramp down the back fence is not a good solution.
- Overlook from the roof could be redesigned and improved for privacy.
- Laneway landscaping should be on your property.
- The laneway doesn't look public and hasn't addressed input from other neighbours.
- A scaled down application would be more appropriate for the site.
- There's a lot of hardscape within the confines on top of the parkade.
- The concrete planter with the tree on the south-east corner will be difficult to maintain with the provided soil depth.
- It makes sense to have back doors be the fire department access points but doesn't help visitors to arrive.
- There is a lot of overlook, railings could be inset a bit further.
- Seek a relaxation of parking, it is a walkable neighbourhood. You don't need to provide underground parking.

Presenter's comments:

- Surface parking was turned down.
- One unit doesn't pay for a parkade.
- If the setback changes, the project dies.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 273-275 East 8th Street and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner:

- Staff to investigate the parking variance to reduce the massing of the infill;
- Reduce the massing of the building;
- Ensure direct access routes and unit identification from the street
- Reduce overlook from the roof to neighbours on the east and west;
- Review setbacks to the east property line and increase setbacks; and
- Maintain a minimum 4ft side yard with the zero lot line.

**Carried
4 For
2 Against**

5. 818 West 15th Street (Rezoning Application)

The City has received a Rezoning application for 818 West 15th Street. The application proposes a six storey mixed-use building with ground-level retail, and five levels of residential strata.

This application is for a rezoning from the current CS-1 Zone (with Land Use Contract) to a Comprehensive Development Zone with no Land Use Contract. No variances have been specifically requested and a thorough Zoning compliance check has yet to be completed. Any deficiencies will be conveyed to the applicant at a later date.

Staff would like to receive feedback on the proposal with respect to the following:

- Proposed form and materials
- Opportunities for pedestrian permeability (i.e. mid-block pedestrian connection) and other public realm improvements
- Opportunities for indoor and outdoor amenity space
- Building circulation
- Passive design elements to support energy efficiency of the building

Cam Halkier, SHIFT Architecture, described the project to the Panel:

- In a frequent transit development area.
- Existing site is suburban typology.
- Approximately 250 feet of frontage, 130ft of depth.
- Nine commercial units, 10,600 sq. ft.
- 2400 sq. ft. of daycare.
- Parking is compliant with the Bylaw.
- Providing sheltering roof over the entire building.
- Introducing saddle bags that frame the balconies and break up building façade.
- Building benefits from clean and concise set of materials.
- Upper levels are painted panelized cementitious panels.
- Architecture features are metal with glass railings and an introduction of the metal screen that divides off the head of the building.
- Residential entry projects out from the face and breaks the commercial into two distinct neighbourhoods.
- End of trip facilities within the first floor.
- Reasonably well defined, calm building with strong base and clean crisp modern expression.
- Step Code 3 for the residential, commercial is Step Code 2.
- LEC connection.
- Jobs created through the commercial space.

N. Petrie left the meeting at 7:50PM.

Marina Rommel, Connect Landscape Architecture, reviewed the landscape plan:

- Create a vibrant active commercial frontage.
- Have very wide patio spaces.

- Series of planting beds and new trees provide space for a new sidewalk, gives more of an urban feeling.
- Providing bike parking.
- East side has the daycare entrance facing the lane.
- Underground lighting to activate the frontage with seat benches.
- Native planting and robust stormwater retention system.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Is the daycare outdoor space at the lane side on the north? **A:** Yes.
- What requirements does commercial daycare have for providing hours of daylight? **A:** We engaged a daycare consultant, went to VCH and had the outdoor space reviewed. The orientation was satisfactory.
- Why is there no residential amenity? **A:** As it is a central location, we didn't feel we needed to provide something. There is also fitness nearby. With the lack of affordable housing for first time buyers, we are trying to appeal to them.
- What construction method are you using? **A:** Wood over concrete.
- Will there be public art included? **A:** No.
- What lighting treatment are you providing for the entry into the underground parking from the back? **A:** It hasn't been developed but will be a well lit space. The intention is to provide an adequate amount of light to make it a space that is not desirable to get down into.
- Have you looked into counter graffiti measures for the long wall? **A:** No, it is a good location for artwork and decorating over time.
- Is the entry to the commercial parking secured all the time? **A:** It will be open during regular business hours and closed after hours. A secondary gate within the parkade divides off residential from commercial.
- Is there just one door into the bike storage lockers? **A:** Yes, the bike areas provide solid enclosures.
- Is the bike storage one way in and no way out if anything happens? **A:** Yes.
- What are you considering to prevent people from reaching over the fence into the daycare? **A:** It is a number of feet down below grade and a solid fence above it, someone would have to jump the fence and jump down an 8ft planter.
- What is the lighting treatment for the daycare pathway and exit door from the building? **A:** The landscape plan shows what we have for lighting indicating lighting on the pathways.
- Does everyone have access to the garden? **A:** It's not fenced off.
- What's happening with the existing trees on the site? **A:** The larger trees were determined to be trees the City didn't want to keep as they are hazardous.
- To staff: is daycare a requirement? **A:** It's proposed to be the community amenity contribution for .5 FSR bonus density, would be childcare that's delivered to the City to be rented out.
- Have you considered some rent to own? **A:** No.
- Is it a stratified commercial unit? **A:** Yes.
- Will you retain ownership or will the City lease from you? **A:** The space is transferred to the City upon completion then leased to a daycare provider.
- Could there be consideration for installing dome skylights to bring in light to the daycare? **A:** There is a patio space above. The daycare has windows among the front but the most at the back and are fully glazed.

- What is up against the concrete wall, could you consider some type of glass paneling with some natural vines to take away from the stark wall? **A:** On the west side there is a current parking lot that is for the auto space. Something like that would be a public art contribution. If there is something we can do that animates the space through surface treatment, we will take a look at that.
- The balconies glass treatment is clear and not frosted, did you consider storage on the balconies? **A:** The building is better with the non-frosted glazing. We could take a look at it.
- Why didn't you provide any canopies above the commercial units? **A:** The commercial units are set back from the face of the brick and the doors have coverage.
- Strata will have general meetings, why not consider a meeting room? **A:** A lot of strata's don't have a room for meetings. They are usually off site at hotels or other meeting rooms. We wanted to reduce strata fees.
- What is the max length guided for a building like this? **A:** The general requirement is to no exceed 100ft.
- What's the connection from the lane to the front of the building and from visitor to commercial? **A:** The commercial elevator provides access for loading to residential units and direct access to the front of the building and access to each commercial units and daycare. Both stairs exit to West 15th Street.
- Why can't the garden be easily accessed from the front? **A:** The elevator goes up through the residential units and provides direct access to the lobby to get back into the garden. It's difficult to create a pass-through in a commercial situation.
- Is the drop-off for daycare off of 15th Street? **A:** That hasn't been explored.

Comments from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Amenity rooms are not very large, there would not be a cost savings to not have it.
- Bring more light into the daycare.
- Animate the concrete wall.
- Having bike storage in an unsecured area to the public with a chain link fence advertises the bikes. A solid wall with one way in creates an area for people to be captured in.
- Look at a treatment for the long wall in underground parking to discourage graffiti.
- Review natural surveillance at the rear access door by the daycare.
- Provide adequate fencing around the daycare and ensure security of that is equipped.
- The streetscape is excellent and lively.
- There's not much activity, planting or use at the rear lane.
- The long driveway being exposed doesn't look good from above.
- The daycare section of the lane is weak and should have more landscape screen and fencing design section with more width and depth.
- Lack of indoor and outdoor amenity space.
- Canopies are needed for south facing commercial spaces and could add to the architecture.
- Rooftop could be used for outdoor amenities.
- Look into the drop off situation for the daycare, either off the lane or 15th Street.
- Project should contribute public art.
- Long wall at the ramp to the parkade that could be day lit a bit.

A. Girard left the meeting at 8:55PM.

Presenter's comments:

- Understand problematic things with bikes and theft.
- Concrete wall exposure would be an area where a mural would work, could look at something to bring the gate up further with a trellis structure or green vines.
- Took a look at surface drop off at the lane from the pathway to the side door, greening up the backspace was a benefit for the area.
- Possibilities to open it up and feel more like an amenity.
- Can look at providing daylighting for the daycare although might not be clear.
- Will take the amenity space into consideration.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 818 West 15th Street and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Development Planner:

- Consider adding an indoor and outdoor residential amenity;
- Improve CPTED issues on the lane setback and frontage; and
- Improve setback landscaping adjacent to the daycare play area on the lane.

Carried Unanimously

Break 9:12 - 9:17PM.

6. Zoning Bylaw Amendment to Enclose Private Balconies

Gary Penway presented on the Zoning Bylaw Amendment to Enclose Private Balconies. Highlights include:

- Reporting back to Council in July 2021 with zoning Bylaw amendment and revised Balcony Enclosure Guidelines.
- Simplify the balcony definition and requirements.
- Full window enclosures with tinted glazing limits transparency.
- Not considered a balcony, just another room.
- Retractable glazing system is fully transparent and has a system to close but still has air gaps, can include outdoor furniture.
- Current open appendage definition: an exterior space that is left open to the environment.
- Providing a simpler calculation that counts only exterior perimeter and provides for all types of balconies.
- Suggested recommendation to simplify the open appendage definition and permit clear retractable glazing on balconies.

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

- How will you regulate blinds or other things with retractable glazing? **A:** We wouldn't want to regulate that they are prohibited. Blinds are a good thing in terms of energy consumption and heating and cooling.
- Wont be consistent throughout a whole building.

- Couldn't this be included as any type of enclosure? What need is there to put in a retractable one? **A:** The City is not ready to give away balconies for full enclosures with sealed windows. It has more potential for creating a blockage and affect the architecture of the building. For now, Council is asking to consider retractable. These systems weren't invented when most zoning Bylaws were written. We are trying to get an understanding that this is not creating interior space, balconies should not be considered part of the FSR. Municipalities are beginning to understand that it should be acceptable and encouraged. Making balconies more usable without changing the look of the exterior.
- It will create a space outside in a rainy city protected from elements and providing some air flow. It will also create a beautiful and distinct look.
- Will there be a design mechanism or development permit to acquire beforehand? **A:** The City uses development permits minimally, to put in that control we have to create development permit guidelines as an OCP amendment and new permit system for the purpose.
- Does this work in both new and existing buildings? **A:** Yes.
- How does a barbecue work in a space like that? Is it up to the user to know to open it up? **A:** Fire marshals are saying they won't allow barbecues in the enclosed areas, it could be restricted.
- The Fire Department will be part of the reviews of the development permit.

It was regularly moved and seconded

Having considered the memo of the Planning Consultant, dated June 10, 2021 entitled "Open Appendage/Retractable Balcony Enclosure Zoning Bylaw Amendment":

THAT the Advisory Design Panel supports amending the Zoning Bylaw to:

- Simplify the Open Appendage definition; and
- Permit clear retractable glazing on balconies.

Carried Unanimously

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, July 7th, 2021.

Chair