

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, January 15th, 2014**

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**MINUTES**

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**Present:** B. Harrison  
B. Allen  
H. Besharat  
K. Bracewell, R.C.M.P  
D. Siegrist  
A. Epp  
M. Messer  
M. Saii  
Councillor Bell

**Staff:** E. Adin, Deputy Director, Community Development  
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk  
N. LaMontagne, Manager Long Range and  
Community Planning, Community Development

**Guests:** **1616 Mahon Avenue (Rezoning Application)**  
Behrouz Monadizadeh, Domustix Development Corp.  
Payman Khodarahmi, Owner  
David Rose, PD Group Landscape Architecture Ltd.

**Absent:** J. Marshall  
Y. Khalighi  
C. Perry

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

**1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held December 11th, 2013 be adopted.

**Carried Unanimously**

**2. Business Arising**

Everyone was reminded that help cleaning up at the end of the meeting would be appreciated.

Members were reminded that an extra ADP meeting has been scheduled for January 29<sup>th</sup>.

The Volunteer Appreciation Reception will be on May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 pm in the Atrium, City Hall.

### 3. Staff Update

A new Manager of Development Planning has been appointed; Mark Lynch will start at the City on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

E. Adin reviewed relevant planning development projects and policy items from the December 16<sup>th</sup> and January 13<sup>th</sup> Council meetings.

*Councillor Bell entered the meeting at 5:40 pm.*

### 4. Review of Draft Official Community Plan

N. LaMontagne reviewed the draft Official Community Plan (OCP) with particular reference to Chapters 2 and 10.

There is a design-related emphasis with a focus on a complete and compact community, goals to enhance sense of place, the development of development permit guidelines, the encouragement of excellence in developments, and an emphasis on quality in the public realm.

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

- Are there design guidelines for street character? **A:** No. It would be hard to keep such a document up-to-date. Instead we will be substantially increasing the development permit areas with design guidelines e.g. Duplex Design Guidelines, hazard lands, Residential Level 5, Harbourside Waterfront, East Third Street, etc. These will be in the Zoning Bylaw and can be improved as needed, rather than requiring OCP amendments.
- The size of residential units is shrinking so residents are spending more time outside in the public realm. **A:** As density occurs, we want to retain the pedestrian scale in the streetscape along Central Lonsdale. Buildings should be designed to enable social interaction, recreation. Social health is important and needs to be supported by the public realm. It is a big theme in the OCP.
- Is there a better name than "frequent transit development area"? One that relate to the history of the area? **A:** Metro Vancouver requires that we identify frequent transit areas.
- The quality of diagrams on pages 44, 103 and 104 needs to improve. Perhaps you could use different graphics to illustrate the transitional densities and building forms on page 33.
- For projects in the works should architects follow the requirements of the draft OCP or the existing one? **A:** It depends on the timing. The plan is for the OCP to go to Public Hearing in June. Then we will have to wait for Metro Vancouver approval. It is important for developers to understand the direction the City is taking. We would not expect to process an OCP amendment prior to adoption of the new OCP.
- The area is not very large for the development permit requirements? **A:** Some are category-based on use not geography e.g. coach-house, and some are area-specific e.g. Harbourside.
- What is your vision for the commercial uses in residential areas as outlined on page 32? **A:** The idea is to enable and allow for corner stores, coffee shops; it is hard to imagine where economic conditions will allow it, but we want to enable it.

- Is the policy on design adaptations for sea level rise integrated with the District? **A:** The Hazard Lands Development Permit Area is nearly all along the shoreline, rivers. We are in discussion with the two North Shore Districts and are trying to take a coordinated approach.
- With regard to page 105 I would have wording that encourages creative ideas for development adjacent to creeks.
- Many of the drawings have no trees. Design and development includes nature, parks and trees.
- In clause 2.4.5 the word “landscaping” should be changed to “landscape design” to raise the bar.
- What are the general changes and additions to the OCP particularly for Central Lonsdale? **A:** Densification is the key component but it will not work unless urban design, public realm and amenities support it.
- Who makes the decisions re: school properties? **A:** The School District is a key stakeholder. The City of North Vancouver has a young population compared to the other two municipalities. Two school properties are proposed as Special Study Areas in the draft OCP.
- We need play areas; children are using hallways and lobbies are playgrounds. **A:** There are a lot of teenagers and younger children in the higher density neighbourhoods.
- The OCP will allow increased density in the Central Lonsdale area; what happens to existing concrete buildings that do not want to use the additional density; can they sell it? **A:** If Council approves it, density can be transferred in perpetuity to another development site.
- If the OCP pre-zones an area will the City lose amenity contributions? **A:** We can be explicit about what contributions are expected in return for the increased density. We want to encourage good development; community amenities are not necessarily the main point; all development applications have to conform to City policy. The base density reflects the current OCP.
- One of the assets not considered enough are the streets and circulation of the streets. Streets can be encouraged for play. The City is not doing a good job; it should be very difficult to drive through neighbourhoods. We are supporting cars from an older era. The West End has had careful planning to divert traffic from many streets. Get people out of their homes onto the street. **A:** We are privileging non-motorized forms of transportation in the OCP. The potential for the creative use of lanes has been incorporated into the OCP.
- How do you decide on the density of East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for instance? **A:** This comes out of the public engagement process. There will be a neighbourhood specific process to see what the people in that area want.
- Why is there not higher density proposed higher up Lonsdale Avenue? **A:** We have more capacity to put density elsewhere. We are trying to strike a balance using capacity as a guide. We use the term “integrated land use and transportation”. Lonsdale is established as a major transit corridor. We are trying to emphasize housing choices where the transit supports it. We do have TransLink’s 2040 plan as a guide. Good design and density in the right place is the only thing that has been proven to decrease traffic.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the draft Official Community Plan and supports the Plan as presented.

**Carried Unanimously**

*A. Epp left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.*

#### **5. 1616 Mahon Avenue (Rezoning Application)**

Staff introduced the project which was previously reviewed at the December 11<sup>th</sup> Panel meeting.

Behrouz Monadzadeh, Domustix Development Corp., reviewed the response to the motion passed at the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting:

- The massing of the building to the south was a reason to increase the front setback. The front setback has been increased and the unit with the larger setback is on the south lining up with the neighbour. The 25 foot setback will line up with redevelopment of the property to the north.
- The main floor plan has been revised; the depth of the overhang has been reduced to allow light into the sunken patio.
- The upper floor overhang is set back 18 inches so that the volume of the roof is less overpowering.
- The loft floor has been substantially revised. The roof pitch has been increased. Windows have been replaced with skylights. One deck has been moved to mitigate overlook of the neighbours.
- The size of bedrooms in the suite has increased to accommodate a queen bed, and closets are larger. The window is twice as large as previously, the sunken patio has increased in size. A shallow closet has been added to the entrance.
- The bay window has been redesigned.
- The roof and gable have been redesigned and simplified
- Lighter colours have been used in the materials palette.
- Gable was eliminated from the top of the garage.
- There will be motion-activated lights along the side of the houses, and solar lighting at the front.
- There is no substantial impact on the neighbours from the windows at the side.

David Rose, PD Group Landscape Architecture Ltd., reviewed the revised landscape plan:

- There are two street trees and two trees in the rear.
- Evergreen hedging from the end of the fence lines to the front property line is proposed.
- At the front a cedar hedge acts as a boundary between the two units.
- The planting is a mix of low to medium height shrubs to allow light into the sunken gardens.
- At the rear there is hedging in front of the two decks.
- Planting will soften the back of the garages.
- Climbing plants define the boundary of the two rear yards.

**Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- Can you open the garage door if there is a car parked in the car port? **A:** Yes. The garage is 18 feet deep; the carport is shorter at the side.
- You show new 14 inch trees? **A:** The neighbours do not like the existing cherry and mulberry trees; we will replace with other trees. **Staff:** The arborist on staff will be looking at the street trees and will decide whether we require them to be kept or replaced.
- What is the slope of the entry walkway from the sidewalk? **A:** The lawn area is two feet higher than the sidewalk but the path is flat. The lawn will slope. The number of steps has increased to four steps from two.
- Are there retaining walls along the property line? **A:** There will be retaining walls on the neighbours' side and the fence will go on top of it. We are trying to keep the rear yard flat.

**Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:**

- Good improvements especially the changes to the loft; and how it affects the neighbour to the south.
- Thank you for how you show the changes in your response.
- It has improved dramatically and I support it. I would ask you to consider how the guard rail design could be consistent with the design. Introducing skylights on the south and west will be uncomfortably warm in the summer; you should incorporate a stack venting effect.
- Thank you for a landscape architect's plan. It might be helpful for staff to overlay the topographical plan on the same plan as the landscape architecture plan. It is confusing where walls are and how they relate to the topography along the property lines.
- The project has improved, liveability has improved. The massing setbacks are more sympathetic to the neighbours. You have improved the floor plans and improved the roof.
- On the west elevation you may want to revisit the windows above the storage areas to the increase amount of storage space.
- The carports are small.
- This is another mediocre heritage imitation; it has improved but I hope there are not too many houses constructed with this character in the neighbourhood. It will not improve the neighbourhood.
- Revisit your colour scheme and the proportions of the columns.
- I appreciate the improvements to the basement and in other areas.
- It is cleaner and simpler and expresses itself quite well.
- The significant trees in the front give good solar shading but they are old and may impact circulation; I would encourage the City to replant.

**Presenters' comments:**

- I am not clear about the skylights; there is only one facing south. **A:** We are concerned for the future occupants that it will be too hot in the summer.
- Guard rail details; I am not sure if I understand what we need to do. **A:** With regard to fake heritage there is an unfortunate cheapening of materials if consistent design elements are not followed. Maybe the guardrails should have a heritage character. I am not telling you cannot do it but am trying to make it better.

**Chair's summary:**

- We appreciate that you listened to our comments and came back.
- The design has improved.
- The guard rails should be more in heritage character.
- Skylights will make the loft too hot and create a liveability issue.
- There needs to be clarity for staff with regard to proposed grades in relation to existing grades.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 1616 Mahon Avenue and recommends approval subject to addressing the following issues to the satisfaction of the Manager of Development Planning:

- Reconsideration of the design of the guard rails to match the architectural character;
- Review of the proposed grade changes with the Planning Department;

**FURTHER**, the Panel recommends that an arborist review be completed on the existing street trees.

**Carried Unanimously**

**6. Other Business**

None.

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, January 29th, 2014.



Chair