

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 16th, 2011**

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**MINUTES**

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- Present:** J. Bitar  
T. Cailles  
K. Kallweit Graham  
Y. Khalighi  
K. Kristensen  
S. McFarlane  
M. Messer  
M. Saii  
B. Spencer  
C. Taylor
- Staff:** F. Ducote, Assistant City Planner  
C. Perry, Supervisor, Engineering Services  
R. White, Director, Community Development  
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
- Guests:** Hugh Cochlin, Architect, Proscenium Architecture + Interiors Inc.  
Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect, Sharp & Diamond Landscape  
Architecture Inc.  
Corin Flood, Green Building Consulting + Design  
Ravi Khakh, City Line Developments Ltd.  
Amrik Thandi, Builder
- Absent:** Councillor Trentadue
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A quorum being present, R. White took the Chair and called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. New members, K. Kallweit Graham, S. McFarlane, M. Messer and M. Saii were welcomed to the meeting and all members introduced themselves.

**1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for the year to January 31, 2011**

The meeting proceeded to the election of Chair and Vice Chair for the period February 2011 to January 31 2012. The Panel agreed to election by a show of hands.

Nominations for the position of Chair were requested. C. Taylor was nominated for the position of Chair and accepted the nomination.

No other nominations being received, C. Taylor was elected Chair by acclamation.

Nominations for the position of Vice Chair were requested. B. Spencer volunteered for the position of Vice Chair.

No other nominations being received, B. Spencer was elected Vice Chair by acclamation.

C. Taylor took the Chair at 5:50 p.m.

**2. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 be adopted.

**Carried Unanimously**

K. Kristensen entered the meeting at 5:55 pm.

**3. Business Arising**

R. White reviewed meeting procedures, especially the process involved in drafting a resolution, the purpose of the Advisory Design Panel as an advisory rather than approving body, and the requirement for a quorum. As members of the public are entitled to come and observe advisory body meetings, it is important the meetings, though informal, are run in a business-like manner. He reviewed the role of the councillor on the Panel. There was a discussion on the conflict of interest guidelines; if a member is unsure as to whether they are in a position of conflict of interest on a specific project, they should speak to the staff representative or R. White. In cases where more clarity is required, the City's lawyers can be consulted.

R. White apologized on behalf of staff for any confusion arising from the fact that a project did not come back to the Panel for review when the resolution on the project requested it.

Copies of the book "100 Year Sustainability Vision" were distributed to members.

R. White left the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

**4. Staff Update**

F. Ducote gave the staff update.

222-238 Lonsdale Avenue: The Public Hearing is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup>. The design has been amended in response to view concerns from neighbours to the north.

Harry Jerome: A stakeholders meeting will be held soon.

1308 Lonsdale Avenue: Will not come to advisory bodies until the proposal has been reviewed by staff in detail. Access is a key issue. Staff are trying to arrange a meeting with the developers of 1250 Lonsdale Avenue, 1308 Lonsdale Avenue and the owners of the north west corner site of Lonsdale Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street to work on coherent urban design.

1250 Lonsdale Avenue: The issue of density has to be resolved before coming back to the Design Panel.

**5. 212 Brooksbank Avenue - MEC (Rezoning and OCP Amendment)**

Staff provided background on the project. The development has been moved to the south to address pedestrian access, parking and identity issues. CPTED remains an issue. The Advisory Planning Commission raised the issue of context sensitive design relevant to the North Shore.

The Chair read the motions from the December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010 ADP and January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 APC.

Hugh Cochlin, Architect, Proscenium Architecture + Interiors Inc., Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect, Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture Inc., and Corin Flood, Green Building Consulting + Design reviewed the revised design:

- The previous presentation showed the building in the north end of the site but the location was revisited following comments from staff, ADP and consultants. In order to address circulation issues the building has been moved forward and the parking moved to the back; this separates the pedestrian and vehicle realms more effectively and maintains the connection with the park.
- The new design includes more extensive infiltration structures around the site to retain and infiltrate all storm water so none will be going into the municipal sewer.
- MEC is working with the Engineering and Parks Department to blur the edge with the park.
- The gateway feature has been terraced and moved closer to the street giving a strong connection for people on Cotton Road; the grades were improved with the use of a natural swale.
- The material palette has not changed although the entrance to the store has changed to respond to pedestrian flow. The amount of stone along the south elevation has been increased. The saw-tooth roof has special glazing and there is more glazing on the Cotton Road entrance.
- A canopy of cedar with slots for light boxes is a welcoming entrance. Local stone is used on the north and south facades. Clerestory glazing brings natural light into the building.

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

- The access to community room? A: It can be accessed from the store and also locked off. It is lit and has a canopy.
- Do the saw-tooth panels open? A: The louvers do open.
- What is the light source for non daylight? A: T5 lights.
- The pinch point at one corner of the property boundary?. A: It is 30 ft wide.
- Visibility from the corner of Cotton and Main? A: We have tried to balance store function with showing what is going on in the store..
- The public amenity contributions? A: The upgrade to the park and the pathway, sidewalk upgrades to the north and west, improved planting along the edge of the park. MEC will be preparing a plan to maintain the stewardship of the park in conjunction with the City.
- Is there enough soil volume for the trees in the parking lot? A: There will be a continuous soil trench under the paving with 20 to 30 cubic metres of soil per tree similar technology to Silva technology. Staff: A staff memo requesting Silva cells has been prepared.

- Who is responsible for programming of the Community Room? A: MEC make the rooms available to congruent groups on request. Are they well-used? A: It is specifically designed for public access; we think this one will be more heavily used than at our other stores. Is there a cost to use it? A: Not so far.
- The direction of public art? A: An artist will be designing the gateway to speak to North Vancouver and the watershed e.g. the use of logs, boulders, special paving on the Spirit Trail and integrating the themes of salmon migration, local flora and fauna with ceramic mosaics. A serpentine wall that will edge the terraces.

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

- The parking and pedestrian access works much better; it was awkward before.
- You have maintained much of what we liked about the project before and answered concerns.
- The wall on Cotton Road seems blank; an architectural challenge to make it look less monolithic.
- I really like the project; it has a good west coast feel, nice proportions.
- The parking revision a real improvement; it gives an opportunity to make the building more responsive to the shape of the land it occupies and help build the streetscape.
- The relationship to the park in the east is the weakest part: the strongest materials give primacy to the customer experience with less priority on the public realm. The treatment of the entry node to the park is a little weak. The east side is a bit closed down with little transparency.
- The community room is a nice feature but access from the parking lot is awkward and it feels relegated to the back. Perhaps there is a way to relocate the community room to help reconcile the street wall.
- It is a nice palette of materials. I would edit the materials down rather than using more. All four sides of the building should be treated equally.
- Great to see an applicant addressing the comments of the ADP thoughtfully.

**Presenters' comments:**

- Concerning the south elevation issue, we have brought the elevation down to make the façade less imposing. The landscaping trees will break up the wall with a naturalistic response. We have to maintain the commercial interests of the client.
- With regard to the interior plan: to have the public amenity room more front and centre would be more advantageous but we are trying to tie it to washrooms. We are trying not to encroach on the property line but will try to improve the entrance. From a green building point of view we are trying to keep hot/cold water amenities concentrated.
- The east elevation comments are well taken. We will look at it to make sure it does not look like the back of the store for loading etc. Stacking the washrooms allows us to have more windows on the wall.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application and OCP Amendment for 212 Brooksbank Avenue and recommends approval subject to the approval by the Development Planner, of the following:

- The access, visibility and identity of the Community Room;
- the architectural character of the east elevation with regard to increased transparency and better integration of material consistent with the other three sides;
- that MEC continue working with the Parks Department to further enhance the public amenities value and landscape character around the perimeter of the building and extending it into the park.

**Carried Unanimously**

*Y. Khalighi left the meeting at 7 p.m.*

*There was a short break*

*The meeting reconvened at 7:20 pm*

#### **6. 306 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street (Rezoning)**

Staff provided background on the project.

The Chair read the resolution from the January ADP meeting.

Ravi Khakh, City Line Developments Ltd. reviewed the presentation boards to the Panel:

- We have simplified the façade and reduced the bulk by removing the gables.
- The design echoes heritage aspects of other buildings in the area.
- We could not pull the basement out of the ground due to the building envelope.
- The location of the flower beds and paths has been changed.
- The colours have been changed to be lighter as the neighbouring homes are both white; the navy blue would stand out more next to them.
- We would like to avoid the use of natural cedar due to maintenance issues; primed and painted products have a longer life.
- The roofline has been changed
- The rear elevation now is the same as the front of the house.

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

- The new design seems more massive than before? A: It is similar to the neighbouring houses. It is a 40 ft wide house so it is difficult to make it look as small as houses on smaller lots. We are copying rooflines from neighbours.
- What are the key merits of the scheme to merit the rezoning? A: The main objective is to provide more affordable housing to allow people to stay in North Vancouver; duplexes are best for that.
- Have you considered French doors to make a better connection to the landscape? A: We would have no problem doing that.
- What is the experience of using the house as a resident and a neighbour? You should have a landscape plan; why is it still missing? A: There have been some changes, we have taken out the fence down the middle.

- The new design looks bulkier because each side is exactly the same. A: A 40 ft wide building side by side duplex seems to work and there are others in the neighbourhood.
- Is there a fence? A: There is a 5 ½ ft high fence between the house and garage.
- Is there a concrete sidewalk going down the side of the building; what is the width? A: The sidewalk jogs around the chimney: it is 36 inches wide.
- How wide are the window wells? A: 2 ft 6 in from the wall. The sidewalk will go around the wells? A: Yes.
- Why are only three trees proposed, and what are they? There should be more plants. A: There is no problem with adding plants and trees.
- Can the building grow any higher? Staff: I believe they are to the limit.

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

- I reiterate my comments about the massing. There are a lot of nice historic homes in the area; this is a real opportunity to draw inspiration from those examples.
- I find it difficult to be supportive of the scheme as presented today. There are some missteps in the bulk which leads me to lose confidence in the designer. I understand the business model for rezoning but a heightened responsibility comes with the benefits of rezoning e.g. enhancing the public realm and giving something back to the neighbourhood for everyone to enjoy, or the work should achieve a high standard in architectural execution and become a milestone in the neighbourhood. In the absence of either of these, there is some merit to be found in a serious piece of innovation e.g. really focussing on the affordability issue. Rezoning should be working towards making our City a better place.
- Affordability should be solved in a way that is sensitive to its neighbours.
- I think the change in colour has not helped; it is very bland and lighter colours make things look bigger. The design seems to be about getting the maximum size for the minimum benefit to the community.
- There is no landscape plan developed by someone who understands landscape. A plan would be a very inexpensive way to bring quality to the project in a hurry.
- Really think about what makes it liveable. I would be concerned with the circulation around the building with the window wells.
- The side gables do reduce the bulk and do not loom over the adjacent property like the original design. The false windows give an impression of a third storey.
- This is a design panel and it would be really beneficial to have the designer present to talk to it. Drawings should be presented so that they can be understood.
- The side windows will not work: they are too big, too deep. Line the reveals with mirror to get more light into the basement.
- Three of the six comments from last month's ADP were not addressed e.g. landscape plan, perspective or model not provided to show the bulk, the application of colour was changed but not necessarily for the better.
- You have not been able to communicate how the building bulk is reduced. The scale of the building is big and massive. It is a difficult challenge but it has not come up to the standard that is required to justify the increased density.

**Presenter's comments:**

- They will return with another design and asked for input on the width of the duplexes.

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the rezoning application for 306 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street and considers the design has not been significantly improved upon since its previous presentation and now recommends rejection. The Panel reiterates its previous concerns, of which the following remain outstanding:

- that the proponents review opportunities to simplify the façade to reduce the bulk of the building with particular attention to respecting the scale and heritage qualities of the existing buildings on the street;
- that a landscape plan be developed for the site to help the integration of the project into the neighbourhood and to try to optimize the accessibility of the house;
- that the proponents provide a perspective view of the project so that it can be better understood in context (a simple block model is an acceptable alternative approach but it must include (at least) the homes on either side of the proposal);
- reconsideration of the application of colour on the building;
- the Panel recommends that the designer of the project attend any subsequent presentations;
- that the applicants provide justification for receiving the benefit of a rezoning through one or more of the following approaches: 1. The contribution to an enhanced public realm, 2. The creation of a high standard of architecture, 3. Innovative design.

**Carried Unanimously**

## **7. Other Business**

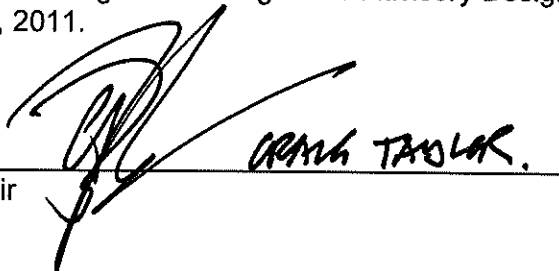
Members were asked to mark their calendars with the date of the Volunteer Recognition Reception which will be on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

The question was asked whether guidelines should be developed for duplexes. F. Ducote told the Panel that some work has been done on elements that work and do not work. He suggested including it on an ADP agenda as a workshop.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Chair



CRAIG TAYLOR.