

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 21st, 2012**

MINUTES

Present:

B. Allen
K. Kallweit Graham
Y. Khalighi
J. Marshall
S. McFarlane
J. O'Brien
Councillor Bell

Staff:

E. Adin, City Planner
C. Purvis, Development Planner
C. Perry, Supervisor, Engineering Services
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests:

730 Marine Drive
Bryce Rositch, Rositch, Hemphill and Associates Architects
Bob Heaslip, Adera
Brad Jones, Adera
Norm Couttie, Adera
Jonathan Losee, Jonathan Losee Ltd.
Presentation House
Dave Atkinson, Pattison Sign Group
127 East 3rd Street
Fred Adab, F. Adab Architects Inc.
Senga Lindsay, Senga Landscape Architecture
Robert Spencer, Planning Consultant
Kamran Tafreshi, Kamcon Construction

Absent:

K. Bracewell, R.C.M.P
B. Harrison
M. Messer
M. Saii

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 February 15th, 2012

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Design Panel held February 15th, 2012 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

The wording of suggested resolution 1b was changed and circulated to members

3. Zoning Omnibus Phase 1 (General Housekeeping)

E. Adin, City Planner, reviewed the report she prepared on proposed general housekeeping of the Zoning Omnibus and asked members for their comments. The report was intended to be general housekeeping, non-contentious items, but Council asked for a closer look at the issues raised. The main purpose of the Zoning Omnibus Phase 1 is to add clarity to the Zoning Bylaw by defining words used in the Bylaw.

Future phases will include what can be done to support more affordable housing, green building, and better design.

A focus group will meet on Thursday April 5th from 4 to 6 pm to discuss the proposed changes. The City Planner asked if anyone wished to be part of the group.

Karen Kallweit-Graham volunteered to represent the Advisory Design Panel at the focus group meeting.

Members were asked if they had any questions or concerns regarding the proposed changes.

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

Cellar floor space which is excluded under the first storey of a house, but not under the porch.

The difference between a basement and a cellar. A: A cellar is more than five feet below grade. There is no differentiation in ceiling height, however, a crawl space has to be less than four feet high.

What about attics? A: The calculation is complicated; our aim is to simplify the process. We do not generally see attic space because height is so closely controlled.

Staff: In Phase 4 we want to rectify the way we calculate building height; the current method in relation to average grade from all four corners is pushing cellars too far into the ground. Staff want to find a way to bring cellars up into the light to create more liveable space.

Counting floor area if a ceiling is over 12 feet; not doing so can result in larger houses.

How does this help duplexes? A: Issues with duplex design will be addressed in the design guideline phase.

Staff: The housekeeping is really about items where there has been confusion e.g. the definition of a trellis; high fencing along a street has been called a trellis rather than a fence.

4. ADP Representative on Energy Efficient Buildings Working Group

E. Adin told APC that the Energy Efficient Buildings Working Group (EEBWG) would be reconvening and asked members to consider being the ADP representative. The working group was active in 2009/2010 and helped produce the green building density bonussing provisions. The group will meet every two to three months for about two hours and will be looking at a retrofit program for existing three-storey walk-up buildings to include health and safety upgrades, energy efficiency upgrades, and building connections to the Lonsdale Energy Corporation.

Yashar Khalighi volunteered to be part of the EEBWG.

J. Marshall joined the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

E. Adin left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

5. Staff Update

Projects

850 Harbourside: (4 storey development, 1 building west of Fell Ave) Bylaw to allow 45% of the floor area to be used for Service Commercial Uses and the balance for Industrial Business Park Uses was given 2nd and 3rd Reading on February 20th and had final adoption on February 27th.

640 West 15th: (2 storey duplex - North of Marine Drive, east of Bewicke) was referred to a Public Hearing on March 19th. It was given Second and Third Reading and will be adopted March 26th.

267-269 East 4th Street: (duplex in front, 1 unit in rear – just west of St Andrews Ave) The PH was held on March 19th. The project was rejected by Council. (This project was reviewed three times by ADP). Question of height and position of garage needed to be moved forward to allow cars to get into it. They were asked to come back with a duplex request.

663 West 3rd Street: (where 2nd and 3rd street meet {De Dutch and Popeye's Supplements}) The PH was held on March 19th. This project to permit two rental units on the second storey of an existing commercial building had third Reading and was approved.

Vancouver Coastal Health: HOpe Centre: The Council passed a motion on March 5th to be recognised as a Partner in the HOpe Centre.

Policies

Single Family Food Scraps Collection: Council approved a motion to proceed with the implementation of curbside single family food scraps collection.

M-4 Industrial Commercial Zone: Had 2nd and 3rd Reading on February 20th and Final Adoption on February 27th.

Affordable and Rental Housing Strategies: This report, which was approved unanimously at the March 19th Council, proposed to broaden zones where lock-off units are a permitted accessory use and decrease minimum unit sizes. It also supported innovative approaches to providing affordable and rental units in existing and new developments.

Moratorium on Enforcement of Secondary Suite Policy: The motion that this be done was carried 4-3. Staff will be submitting a report on the issue. (The BC Building Code is considering measures that would allow for the inclusion of secondary suites in duplexes).

Council Activity

Heritage Awards: These were awarded to the following projects at the February 20th Council meeting: 346 East 8th (1909 Residence), 254 West 6th Street (1921 residence), Ridgeway School.

Capilano University: A delegation came to Council on February 20th to express their continued interest in the Lower Lonsdale Site.

Public Art Grant : A grant of \$7,500 was approved to the NV Community Arts Council. The use of this for "yarnbombing" was debated at Council meetings on February 20th, 27th and March 5th.

Census Population Statistics : Council had many questions on the different population counts in the Census and BC Stats. Differentiation on the pop of the City NV.

Comparison of LEC rates with other Energy Providers: A report to the February 27th Council described a City of Vancouver study that concluded LEC rates were the lowest of the four carriers studied.

Daycare spaces utilizing School Board facilities: On February 27th staff were directed to write a report on an inventory of childcare spaces and directed to increase efforts in this regard. The question was asked about the percentage of spots occupied by City children.

Lower Lonsdale Delegation: A delegation came to the March 5th Council meeting to request funding for two festivals (Party at the Pier and Christmas Festival - \$70,000) and \$60,000 for administrative support. Staff were directed to see if the \$130,000 requested could be put in the budget.

It was mentioned that it would be helpful to see slides of projects.

Action: Staff to show slides for rezoning proposals referred to in the staff update.

As the meeting was running early, The Presentation House Freestanding Sign presentation was brought forward on the agenda.

6. Presentation House Freestanding Sign (Development Variance Permit Application)

Staff provided background on the project. The application is for a freestanding sign for the Presentation House theatre, museum and gallery.

Dave Atkinson, Pattison Sign Group, reviewed the design for the Panel:

- Presentation House relies heavily on public support and needs an effective sign.
- The current sign has been in place for many years, is rusted and needs to be replaced.
- The height of the board is to protect the electrical portion from vandalism.
- Replacing the reader board with an electronic system will allow the staff to keep it more current; it will also be easier to update.
- The sign is a steel frame with an aluminum cover.
- The City has granted Presentation House the necessary funds to replace the sign.
- The sign can be moved if Presentation House is relocated to another location.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- Can the reader board display art? A: Photos can be used.
- What is the existing height? A: 20 feet versus 16 feet proposed.
- Will the words "Presentation House" be lit? A: Yes.
- Is there landscaping at the base? A: Not at this point.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I like it; it is slick and nice and simple.
- It is an improvement.
- Why not make "Presentation House" more prominent; the event jumps out more, becomes more important.
- It should have a bit more landscaping.
- It speaks of the nature of the gallery as it has a photographic look to it.

Presenter's comments:

The events notices will be dominant as the graphics change. It does conform to the bylaws at the foot of Lonsdale if it has to be moved. I agree that landscaping at the foot of the sign would soften its look.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Development Variance Permit Application for the Presentation House Freestanding Sign and recommends approval of the project, but would like to see a landscape treatment at the base of the sign.

The Panel commends the applicant for the quality of the proposal.

Carried Unanimously

7. 730 Marine Drive (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project. The application is to rezone the existing CS-1 Commercial Service Zone property to a Comprehensive Development Zone to allow a four-storey building consisting of one storey of retail-commercial at grade with three additional stories of residential above. The applicant is requesting a variance in height from 35 feet to 55 feet. The motion from APC was read.

Bryce Rositch, Rositch, Hemphill and Associates Architects, reviewed the project:

- The design responds to the Marine Drive Guidelines.
- The applicant was asked to replace all commercial currently on the site.

- The residential entrance is on 14th Street with the commercial on Marine Drive.
- There is a single access point to parking.
- Retail parking has easy access to the store fronts through the courtyard.
- The 10 foot setback plus the boulevard gives an opportunity for a play area on 14th Street.
- There will be diagonal parking on 14th Street which will help slow traffic.
- The courtyard on Marine Drive will be animated with trees, benches, fountains.
- A 10 foot wide north-south pedestrian path leading to a mini park is planned for the east side of the building. The hope is that the neighbouring building will also have a 10 foot setback. The pathway is straight with no hidden corners for safety reasons.
- All fourth floor units have access to private patios.
- The use of cedar soffits gives a west coast feel to the project.
- The amenity space on 14th Street is open to the street.
- The unit plans include some live-work units.

Jonathan Losee, Jonathan Losee Ltd., reviewed the landscape plan:

- The landscape plan reflects the Marine Drive Landscape Guidelines with plant material from the planting list and interesting paving patterns including granite-set paving, exposed aggregate bands and broom finish concrete with gridded score lines giving a refined urban ground plane against the commercial feeling of the building at grade.
- There is a very generous front boulevard with a six to eight foot planting strip for a very pleasant pedestrian experience.
- There will be a rain garden on Marine Drive with protected edges and a controlled planting scheme giving it an urban edge.
- The corner nodes are highlight areas and will have elements of play: art, fanciful street furniture etc.
- The commercial face wraps around the edge to the north which makes it more interesting changing from the more urban edge on Marine Drive to a more residential feeling on 14th Street where there will be more granite and interesting features including granite block seating elements with lighting and landscaping at the foot of the residential building.
- Public art and water will be used in the southern courtyard which also has gated access to a small upper courtyard for all the residents. Residents on the third floor will have access to garden plots. The hope is to have an indoor-outdoor relationship to animate the courtyard space.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- How many guest parking stalls? A: 12: 0.25 per apartment per the bylaws.
- What landscaping is between the courtyard and marine drive? A: There is a six-eight foot buffer between the benches and road which helps with safety issues.
- You are proposing a height of 55 feet over the 35 feet height in the Marine Drive Development Guidelines? A: Up to 55 feet; we are slightly below, the height is similar to 700 Marine and Noma.
- Are there studies on how the height affects the neighbouring properties? A: Under the Zoning Bylaw extra height is permitted through excellent design and by meeting other requirements. The building is in the same scale as the other developments in the area.
- What benefit is the City getting for the extra 20 feet? A: We are providing amenities to benefit the public and a high level of sustainability.
- My concern is the landscaping on Marine Drive blocking the commercial signage. Staff: the streetscape guidelines approved by Council includes the trees to be used; the

minimum standard is seven feet high with higher foliage. Applicant: We will be working with the municipality to pick a street tree which will work with the project.

- There is no parking on Marine Drive? It makes it harder for commercial tenants. A: It is not possible due to a transit bus stop; it does give more room for streetscape.
- There is an increase in commercial space but no increase in parking? A: We meet the commercial parking bylaw. We have counted the live-work as commercial space which does not have the same parking requirements as straight commercial space.
- Do you show the square footage of storm water runoff going into the rain garden? A: It is a token rain garden, not a bioswale and was designed per the Marine Drive Streetscape Guidelines.
- Is it green on the top roof? A: We prefer to let the residents take care of their own individual amenity spaces; there will be extensive planting. The roof is predesigned for hot tubs and planters.
- Are there vines growing up the wall? A Yes, on the face of the parkade wall on the east side of the building.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I like it; you worked hard to get light into every unit.
- I like the materials suggested. I am wondering how pedestrian friendly the north side will be. There is the potential of a great connection with the park and Mosquito Creek. Is there a way to make it even more connected with safer access?
- I have concerns with how the benefit is earned for the density and height going from 35 to 55 feet. It needs to be clear.
- The fact that the building steps back on Marine Drive is very positive.
- I have a concern about the jogging of the residential block; it could be calmed down.
- What about views that might be blocked; are the neighbours behind happy or not?
- I am concerned about Unit C.
- The courtyard will not be used by residents who have to go out of the building, around and up the street and up the stairs. It should be possible to get from the elevator lobby to the garden. Access is too complicated.
- I am concerned about the at-grade experience on 14th Street.
- We should have shadow studies.
- Because there is no parking on Marine Drive, I have a concern that the commercial units are not seen very well.
- I like the idea of the north side landscaping to bring in elements from Mosquito Creek; it could be extended to the corner and integrated more with Mosquito Creek.
- I really like the look of the project; it will add to the neighbourhood.
- The handling of the podium with the L-shaped building sitting on top does not capture the spirit of the streetscape guidelines of cohesive urban design and it takes a big step away from the intent of the guidelines. The guideline encourages development to maintain a continuous streetwall frontage along Marine Drive. You have spent more time on your scheme which emphasizes the containment of 14th Street at the expense of Marine Drive.

Presenter's comments:

Only 12 people came to our open house and one was concerned about height. The guidelines are guidelines; this type of building has been approved in the past. We will take good ideas away especially about the corner where it connects to Mosquito Creek. The biggest issue is the height and density. We met many times with residents when building Noma which is 2 FSR and 55 feet at the back. There are good comments on other aspects.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 730 Marine Drive and although supporting the site development concept feels the following have not been adequately resolved:

- The access to the common space from the residential building needs further study and improvement;
- More information on blocked views and the impact on neighbours should be presented;
- The liveability and functionality of Unit C facing the common courtyard should be studied;
- There should be exploration of a more pedestrian-friendly treatment on the north side of the building on 14th Street;
- A clearer expression of the Mosquito Creek context in addition to a more legible and safe connection to the park should be encouraged;
- The Panel encourages the integration of functional rain gardens;
- The applicant should ensure the visibility of the commercial units and that commercial signage is not blocked;

Panel commends the applicant for the quality of the proposal.

**Carried
1 against
5 in favour**

*There was a short break at 7:55 pm
The meeting recommenced at 8:05 p.m.*

8. 127 East 3rd Street (Rezoning Application)

Staff provided background on the project. The application is to rezone the Lower Lonsdale site to allow for a seven-storey mixed-use development containing 61 residential units and 5495 sq. ft. of commercial retail space located at grade along the 3rd Street frontage. 18 of the residential units will be denoted as market rental properties, with the remainder being market strata units. The 2.56 FSR is .04 less than maximum allowed.

Bob Spencer, Planning Consultant described the context:

- 3rd Street has a mixture of residential developments including highrises and townhomes.
- The development is at a transition of Official Community Plan uses: Town Centre Mixed Use and then it transitions to Level 5 Medium Density Uses.
- Prior to making a formal application, a public meeting was held in January and the applicant has met with strata councils of the neighbouring buildings.
- The design tries to respect the Versatile building's architectural expression.
- There will be public art but the program has not been established.

Fred Adab, F. Adab Architects Inc., reviewed the design:

- The main floor has four commercial retail units with two residential units at the back.
- The ramp to the parking is almost flat.
- There is a children's play area, exercise room and storage room at the back of the building.

- To respect the 80 foot radius from the Olympic Tower the south side of the building has been set back at the fifth floor which is a transition floor.
- The building has been designed in response to surrounding buildings and creating a mix use project. The materials palette reflects the Lower Lonsdale masonry material.
- The retail is set 10 feet back along East 3rd Street which will be an opportunity to create a pleasant pedestrian experience.
- The lower three floors are designed with three masonry frames; the upper floors are set back to respect the height of the buildings on the east and west and to reduce the impact on views enjoyed by neighbouring properties.
- The massing at the lane has been softened and set back to take advantage of the sun.
- The setback provides generous terraces on the first, second and fifth floors.
- There are two vertical elements connecting the lower and upper floors.

Senga Lindsay, Senga Landscape Architecture Landscape described the landscape plan:

- At the ground plane the landscape reflects the streetscape at the site on the corner of Lonsdale to create a pleasant walkway through an allée of trees with complementary paving carried on from the corner.
- The planting will carry on in front of the western neighbouring building.
- The vertical dimension will create outdoor rooms for the commercial units.
- Most of the landscaping is on the south side.
- The planting palette is green, red and variegated plants to give a modern flair to the building.
- Generous-sized patios are flanked by native vine maple, dogwoods to break down the mass of the building.
- On the 6th floor level there are small vignettes of green roofs with red, gold and green plants.

Questions from the Panel included but were not limited to:

- What is the OCP height for Lower Lonsdale? Staff: 23 metres or about 75 and half a feet. Applicant: We will be 70 ft to the parapet; the building was going to be eight stories but we chose to go with a 69 foot seven-storey building.
- What about views? A: No buildings are impacted because at the 50 foot line which is allowed, all views are lost.
- Why have you not provided visitor parking? A: We wanted to have amenities on the P1 level and thought it would be acceptable to have less visitors' parking. There is ample public transit: 3rd Street is a primary connecting route and the Seabus is within walking distance. There are many public amenities within walking distance: recreation centre, Lonsdale Quay. We opted to provide a safe children's play area as the area is a hub for young families and fits the social sustainability strategy. John Braithwaite Community Centre is over capacity so we are providing a gym. Both rooms have natural light.
- Have you done an analysis of how many visitors use transit? A: No.
- In terms of height the OCP ends across 3rd Street? A: Yes, in the centre of 3rd Street.
- How do retail tenants access their storage space? A: Through the stairs and the elevator, or off the lane.
- How accessible are the handicapped units? A: Level 2 Accessibility.
- Can Suite C2 NE corner get on to their roof deck? A: We will have to look at it.
- Does the bedroom at the back of Suite A1 have windows? A: No; it has a glass partition.
- Are the rental units market rental? A: Yes; there will be 18 units: 12 on the second floor and six on the ground. 12 of the 18 suites have patios.

- How many people came to the public meeting? A: On January 18 at John Braithwaite Centre 16-18 people came (3,087 flyers were sent out). We had direct meetings with neighbouring strata councils and the owner of the heritage building. We offered view analysis to all of them.
- Did you coordinate the placement of the childcare facility with the shadow studies? A: Unfortunately, the shadow from the Olympic Tower will affect it.
- Do the upper suites have a water view? A: Yes.
- Does the layered design push the building up higher? A: The setbacks on the east and west were due to four storey buildings on either side; we wanted to cut the massing of building and give openness. On the south side we stepped back at the third floor and the fifth floor had to step further back due to zoning regulations.
- What height is the Versatile building? Staff: 52 feet; the FSR was set not to exceed 2.6. It is LL2, this building is LL3.
- Did you consider outside amenity areas? A: The residents have direct access to their own patio space. We have set back the children's amenity room to create some outdoor space with planters. There is the issue of taking away the privacy of the residents.

Comments of the Panel included but were not limited to:

- I think it is quite successful to the fourth floor but the top three floors suffer. The very vertical expression needs to be dematerialized. It feels massive and blocky. The lower levels very simple and elegant.
- The children's area is not generous enough and may be in the wrong place; you could cut back the corner at the parking ramp and open the corner up to the west light.
- I do not see why you would relax visitor parking.
- The upper floors make it narrower and taller.
- The roof seems to be a missed opportunity.
- The balconies are too small; I would like to see them bigger and more cohesive, and ultimately, more usable.
- CRU 3 and 4 could both have access into the hallway; why not?
- It is a tricky site because it is right on the border of the OCP. There should be a transitional height zone.
- I am concerned about the handicapped accessibility of the accessible units.
- The decks on the north side will not be used because they are set back so will be very dark.
- The children's play area would benefit from having windows from the exercise room or from the laundry room to give parents a reason to be down there.
- I am uncomfortable with the massing; it is out of context. It is on a zoning cliff.
- The idea of having the gym is great but the basement location is unfortunate.
- I agree with moving the exercise room and childcare facility to the west to open it up.
- I would encourage putting some vegetation on the roof and making it an accessible amenity for the people who live in the building.
- There are some successful elements up to four stories; it is harder to be enthusiastic about the higher floors. There is a hierarchy issue: the weight of the top piece is greater or equal to the podium it is rested on. The Versatile building is more elegant.

Presenter's comments:

- We appreciate the discussion about the massing; the Versatile has two frontages and a deeper site and is LL2; this in the LL3. The Versatile does not have the 80 foot restriction. We have tried to work with the architecture of the Versatile.

- The building is the size because of rental component. It is not easy to build rental as the financial dynamics do not fare well. This affects the height and massing of the building.
- The 2.56 FSR does not include the rental so it is a larger building of 3.39 FSR as .83 FSR on the site represents the rental.
- We do not disagree with the comments about the children's play area and may move it to the retail storage space to capture more light.
- We thought about glass walls facing the corridor between the gym and children's play area but think the strata will require parents to be in the same room with the children.
- Access by the retail units via the back corridor makes sense, unless there is a code issue. We do not see any reason why we would not do it.
- The public information session was outside the scope of the development application. We will be having a Town Hall meeting because of the density bonus.
- We will definitely look at the handicapped units and accessibility and address the definition of a two bedroom unit.
- The mid rise buildings have a purpose; we do not feel it is really out of context.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Design Panel has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 127 East 3rd Street and, although supporting the site development concept, feels the following have not been adequately resolved:

- Improvements should be made to the upper three floors to deal with the apparent bulk of the massing;
- Development or re-exploration of the children's play area and other building amenities to give a better connection to light, air and green space;
- Development of the balconies to be more generous and improve the overall usefulness;
- Design development of the handicapped units.

Carried Unanimously

9. Other Business

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Design Panel will be held on Wednesday, April 18th, 2012.



 Chair