

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, July 9th, 2014**

MINUTES

- Present:** J. Jensen (Chair)
D. Farley
P. McCann
M. Robinson
B. Watt
Councillor Bell
Councillor Buchanan
- Staff:** N. LaMontagne, Manager, Long Range and Community Planning,
Community Development
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk
- Guests:** **1549 St. George's Avenue (Rezoning Application)**
Kerry Kukucha, Signal Investments Ltd.
David Porte, Porte Development Corp.
Harvey Hatch, H.R. Hatch Architect Ltd.
Meredith Mitchell, M2 Landscape Architecture
Jan Voss, CTS Creative Transportation Solutions
- Absent:** A. Jamieson
B. Phillips
M. Rahbar
D. Marshall
C. Sacre
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A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held June 11th, 2014

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held June 11th, 2014 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

None.

3. Staff Update

N. LaMontagne reviewed relevant planning development, project and policy items from the June 16th, 23rd and July 7th Council meetings. Discussion ensued.

4. 1549 St. George's Avenue (Rezoning Application)

This application is to rezone the existing property to permit a full renovation and a new fourth floor. The number of rental units would increase from 13 units to 29 units (22 one-bedroom units plus 7 two-bedroom units). Parking would remain off the lane; the requirement for a BC Hydro transformer will leave space for six stalls including one disability stall.

Staff asked for the Commission's input on the density bonus for market rental units, the proposed nine vehicle stall parking reduction, the proposed traffic management plan, the unit typologies and liveability, the provision of outdoor amenity space and the height and massing.

Harvey Hatch, H.R. Hatch Architect Ltd., outlined the project to the Commission:

- The current building is two and a half stories and has 13 large units.
- The building is close to Lions Gate Hospital, shops and transit.
- The architecture in the surrounding area is largely mid-1950's two-storey stucco rental apartments.
- The applicant proposes to level the current two stories and then add two floors as well as an elevator and roof deck.
- Existing parking is six spaces off the lane; the project will add bicycle lockers.

Meredith Mitchell, M2 Landscape Architecture, reviewed the landscape plan:

- The landscape design includes a front yard rain garden which will capture a portion of roof drainage for storm water management. Water from the roof will also be used for the rooftop planters.
- There is a ramp at the front for access.
- The existing street trees will be monitored.
- Layered, stepped cedar hedging will provide privacy.
- Feature trees will be deciduous for summer shade and winter sun.
- The terrace on the top floor will have recycled plastic decking.
- Maple trees on the rooftop deck will add colour when seen from the street.
- The landscape at the entry area is mainly green and white for an oasis effect.

Jan Voss, CTS Creative Transportation Solutions, reviewed the parking plan:

- A mini traffic study was carried out which indicated that the additional units will add seven more vehicle trips. The survey showed street parking consistently available during the day; at the peak demand time of 2 p.m. there were 24

spaces available in the area, at midnight there were an average of 53 spaces available. A parking survey of rental housing nearby at 1144 St. George's Avenue showed very little demand during the day with it peaking at night.

- Rental housing generally generates less parking demand and traffic trips.
- There is no opportunity for additional parking on the site so a parking variance is required; the six stalls will remain but one will be designated handicapped, one for visitors, resulting in a shortage of 10 parking stalls.
- The applicant has spoken to staff about changing the parking configuration in front of the site; 45 degree diagonal parking would add one space to the current three, 60 degree diagonal parking would add two spaces. This is the only way to add parking without changing the footprint of the building.
- One parking space could also be designated for a car share program. The City of Vancouver gives a credit of four parking spaces for each car share space.

Questions from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- Can the space on the roof be bigger? **A:** There is only one exit so capacity will be limited to 60 people at one time.
- Is the elevator going to the roof? **A:** Yes; it will be a fire elevator.
- What provision is there for the existing tenants? **A:** There will be lots of advance warning with a public information meeting in September and the Public Hearing in January 2015. We will try to accommodate them in our other building
- What are the rents now? **A:** They are in the high \$800's; one bedroom units will be \$1100-1200 including in-suite laundries which they do not have now. The rate will ultimately be what the market will bear.
- How large will the suites be? **A:** An average of 500 sq. ft. The existing suites are much larger but very inefficient and need a lot of improvements.
- What storage will there be? **A:** There is an area with 48 bicycle lockers and "bulk storage" units which will be shared. There is not enough space for every suite to have a bike locker and a storage locker. There will be an abundance of bicycle space. We are looking at a bike coop program for residents.
- The suites are going from 1400 sq. ft. to 500 sq. ft.; I am concerned about liveability. **A:** The layouts will be more efficient.
- Did you have a specific car coop in mind? **A:** No.
- Can you talk about the rationale for the density bonusing? **A:** We will be spending the equivalent of a new building on the above ground structure. A building of this size would not be economically viable with underground parking. We wanted to continue to offer rental housing in a way that would be the most beneficial to the City and provide an economic return.
- How many of the existing tenants have cars? **A:** The six stalls are used; sometimes there is a space. In our other buildings there seems to be a decrease in parking use.

Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- More rental units is good. I like the idea of diagonal parking. I am concerned about parking with the increase from 13 to 29 units.
- I am also concerned about the amount of storage.
- Overall I would support it as a project; the massing is reasonable for the area. I echo the sentiments on parking but the economics of underground parking would not work. I like the car share program
- I am concerned about the size of the garbage and recycling area.

- The deck would be more liveable if it were bigger. It is small for 60 people.
- I like the storm water management program; the bioswale is welcome.
- It will be a positive improvement to the street.
- You are asking for what will make it work.
- I have minor concerns about the size of the apartments but it is the reality of a rental project
- Parking will be a problem if all the buildings in the area end up with greatly reduced parking spaces, but this is one of the earlier projects renovating a 1950's building so the parking issue is not pressing at the moment. Parking is very difficult for such a small site; a parking garage would be very inefficient. The bigger rental buildings will have enough parking. Tenants of such buildings are often s demographic do not drive any more.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the Rezoning Application for 1549 St. George's Avenue and recommends approval, subject to the approval of the following by City staff:

- Dedication of at least one stall of surface parking to a car share program;
- Review of the size and layout of the garbage and recycling facility; and
- Review of the overall size and layout of the bicycle and additional bulk storage facilities to see if it can be maximized.

The Commission would like the size of the roof deck reviewed to see if it can be increased, subject to fire safety requirements.

The Commission supports the concept of diagonal parking on St. George's Avenue.

Carried Unanimously

5. OCP- Council Direction Update

N. LaMontagne reviewed the direction received from Council following the OCP presentation made on July 7th.

6. Other Business

Members were asked to think about the work plan; which will be discussed at the September APC meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, August 13th, 2014.

Chair