

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, November 13th, 2013

MINUTES

Present: B. Curtis (Chair)
 D. Farley
 P. McCann
 J. Plato
 M. Robinson
 C. Sacre
 B. Watt
 Councillor Bell

Staff: S. Smith, Planner 2, Community Development
 N. LaMontagne, Manager Long Range and Community Planning,
 Community Development
 G. Penway, Director, Community Development
 S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests: **Foot of Lonsdale Update**
 Heather Reinhold, Manager, Waterfront Project, Office of the CAO
 Reid Shier, Director, Presentation House Gallery
 Patricia Patkau, Patkau Architects
 Peter Suter, Patkau Architects
 Joe Fry, Hapa Collaborative Landscape Architects
 Kevin Pike, Presentation House Board

Absent: J. Jensen
 B. Phillips
 M. Rahbar
 Councillor Buchanan

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. **Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held October 9th, 2013**

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held October 9th, 2013 be adopted.

A motion to amend the minutes was proposed.

The amendment was defeated.

The original motion was carried unanimously.

2. **Business Arising**

None.

3. **Staff Update**

S. Smith reviewed relevant planning development, project and policy items from the October 21st, 28th and November 4th Council meetings.

There was a discussion on conflict of interest.

Councillor Bell left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

4. **Foot of Lonsdale Presentation**

Staff requested the Commission's input on the proposal as one of the remaining puzzle pieces in the revitalization of Lower Lonsdale and specific feedback on: the public open space design, proposed uses, building massing and siting of Presentation House Gallery and the PGE Station, the aquatic parterre garden with perimeter deck and the Spirit Trail alignment.

Heather Reinhold, Manager, Waterfront Project, gave an overview of the project:

- The proposal involves both upland and waterfront lot.
- Subsurface works are required because the original concrete ferry dock terminal the site is located on was built in the 1930's and has reached the end of its life. The deck will be removed and a new shoreline created with seismic improvements.
- The PGE Station, one of the City's heritage buildings, will be moved offsite during the remediation process and is included in one of the two layout options.
- The Foot of Lonsdale project, which started in 2010, is now in the design phase.
- The design includes pedestrian improvements at Carrie Cates Court with a Right of Way across a portion of the Washington Marine Group property.
- The demolition of the Cates shed, included in the proposal, opened up more options for design for the Presentation Gallery. Key design considerations included the Lonsdale view corridor and connections to surrounding sites.

- The proposed plaza will act as spill out space from the Gallery and the red roofed Coppersmith Building on the Pier Development to the east, which will animate the space.

Joe Fry, Hapa Collaborative Landscape Architects described the two landscaping options:

- In the first option the tidal plaza is conceived as a large, almost flat plaza with a shallow bench on one side. Water can be turned on to cover the plaza with a thin layer of water people can walk through. The water would be turned off completely for events needing the space for circulation. The second part of the design is a giant wooden bench and platform along the waterfront. There would be a tidal garden on the Cates deck surrounded by walkways. The garden would take stormwater from the plaza, filtering it through wetland plants before falling into the harbour.
- The second option involves a harbour garden plaza as a formal, urban version of a wetland. The garden would be primarily for viewing and would create a distinct character softening the experience of the foot of Lonsdale. Water from the garden would spill over an edge into a linear pool. There would be a small promontory at the edge of the plaza to give another connection into Shipbuilders Plaza. The PGE Station would be placed on Cates Dock and repurposed as an amenity feature.

Patricia Patkau, Patkau Architects, reviewed the design of the Presentation House Gallery:

- The location is an ideal spot for the Gallery.
- The proposed design is scaled in relation to Lonsdale Quay with the main focus the views to the water.
- The main level will have three transparent sides and will contain a reception area, retail space, bookshop, restaurant, and community amenity space.
- The upper level is much bigger than the lower level, protecting the space below. It will have two major spaces: the gallery and an event space.
- The gallery space is fully day-lit by light accessed from the north.
- The façade of the upper floor will be a crinkled metallic surface to refract light like water. Its appearance will change according to the seasons and time of day.

Heather Reinhold continued the presentation:

- The height of the gallery will be the same as the existing Cates Shed: 55 feet.
- There will be 15 parking stalls located offsite, secured through a covenant. A transportation analysis has been done vis-a-vis the removal of the existing parking. The existing parking in the area is not easy to find so wayfinding will be improved.
- There will be eight internal bike stalls and covered and open outside bike racks.
- On Lot A it is proposed to change the zoning from industrial to permit public and commercial use.
- The design is currently being refined to be presented to Council.

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

- Where is the parking? **A:** It would be on city-owned property nearby or negotiated into an adjacent new development. The location has not been finalized.
- Who would manage the retail Space? **A:** It would be an agent on behalf of the city. The bookstore would run by the gallery.
- How does the new space relate to the old Presentation House space? **A:** The gallery space has been doubled, not including the event space. The building is triple to quadruple the current space; the design assumes expanded activities plus retail as requested by the City. We have completed a business plan on the economic viability.
- **To staff:** Is there a height restriction along Lonsdale? **A:** There is typically a second floor setback for taller buildings in Lower Lonsdale however it only applies to mixed use categories which this is not.
- I am curious about the tidal plaza? **A:** There is a lot of variability; we have looked at a number of precedents in Seattle and Portland e.g. The Seattle Opera House.
- What is happening with the current theatre site? **A:** Once we vacate and the museum moves out, the existing building would be torn down or renovated for the theatre's use. They want to stay there.
- What is the height of the Coppersmith Shop? **A:** 34 to 40 feet.
- Where would the revenue from the event space go? **A:** To the gallery. The business plan assumes rental revenue space going to the operating costs. This is critical as incremental revenue will not be increasing.
- What about traffic at the foot of Lonsdale? **A:** We are facilitating a vehicle turnaround for vehicles coming down Lonsdale and to access the Shipyards.
- What is the grade of the public space; is it consistent across the whole property? **A:** The building will be elevated at 4.5 metres to meet the flood control level. The grade change will be accommodated by stepped down risers. The slope across the plaza will be 2%.
- Was there any thought about combining the museum and the gallery? **A:** Council endorsed the current plan. We were originally going to use the Cates Shed; once it had to come down, we designed a new building. The museum wants to be in a heritage structure.
- How do you see this complementing the branding exercise by Roger Brooks? **A:** The consultant is in the loop re design decisions. The benefit is once the overall vision has been determined; this will be a layer on top. The ground floor will be really animated with many elements: retail etc. to add to the life of the space.
- What is the cost of the project? What funding is coming from the City? Is there a drop dead date? **A:** The City has given \$500,000 for design. The total budget is \$15 million. 2014 will be spent fundraising and we will need to be well on our way in order to break ground. It will take about three years to fundraise \$12 million. The subspace work will be done.
- What about the context within the neighbourhood? It is a very different style to what is there. **A:** It was a deliberate decision to have a distinct character from the Shipyards area. It should relate in scale and define the public space.
- The Washington Marine building will remain? **A:** It is privately owned and we worked with them closely and have a better connection to Lonsdale Quay. There is no desire to sell.
- The impact on the view corridor looking down Lonsdale Avenue to the water concerns me. **A:** A one-storey building is best but would take up most of the site.

A three-storey building design had a lot of stairs. So we arrived at the two-storey building design. We have pulled the top floor back in line with street frontage. It is a very tight site; we cannot pull it back in further. We feel that the transparency of the walls helps to open up the building.

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

- I am not sure you will be able to see through the building.
- I like the animation on three sides. It is not the best option to put the PGE building on the dock; not an appropriate use of that land.
- I prefer the tidal plaza option. I have concerns about the massing of the building. I find it quite heavy.
- Will it look more relaxed once the finish is on it? It looks flat in the illustrations.
- I like it overall with what is happening on the plaza.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed design for the Foot of Lonsdale and the Presentation House Gallery; and,

THE Commission supports the public open space design as presented with a preference for the tidal plaza concept and supports the proposed alignment of the Spirit Trail;

THE Commission supports the proposed uses and height of the Presentation House Gallery;

AND THAT the Commission, although supporting the site development concept, feels some aspects have not been adequately resolved and therefore recommends further consideration of the Shipyard context as well as the building massing and view impacts from Lonsdale to the water; and,

FURTHER the Commission prefers that other options be explored for the relocation of the PGE Station.

Carried with one abstention

5. CityShaping Draft OCP: Land Use and Density Bonus Caps

S. Smith told members that the discussion would focus on two key aspects: the land use map and proposed changes and details around density bonus caps as they relate to the Official Community Plan.

G. Penway reviewed the presentation made at the October 28th Policy Committee:

- The density bonus policy will inform the OCP but will also be a separate policy document bridging the OCP and the Zoning Bylaw.
- The consultant's report from the summer contained the following recommendations: a need to standardize terminology, the policy should distinguish between those bonuses above OCP and below, the policy should provide a formula approach, density bonus caps should be considered to give Council flexibility, staff should more comprehensively document what is done

- each time to have an historic record, the policy should be simplified; there are currently six categories in section 5.12 of the 2002 OCP.
- Although the primary intent of density bonussing is not to make money but build great community, people tend to focus on the financial side.
 - The development industry is struggling because they do not know how much to pay for land.
 - The Official Community Plan is an enabling tool.
 - At the moment the City gives bonuses for environmental aspects that people should just do.
 - We should try to standardise the language in the Zoning Bylaw.
 - Everyone wants more certainty. The new policy will probably use a density cap in addition to OCP base density.
 - OCP Density bonus caps will be different for different zones.
 - Public benefits can be built as part of the development or in the form of cash; the suggestion is to put 80% of the cash to the Civic Amenity Fund and 20% to affordable housing.
 - The City is considering taking 70% of the lift in land value.
 - The policy will be a fluid document that can change and will be a guide for Council to bring certainty and clarity. It will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Discussion ensued on affordable housing and the role of the City in providing it.

Councillor Bell rejoined the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

S. Smith gave an overview of possible changes to the current land use map:

- Three key areas have been identified as possible areas to add density: East 3rd Street, Central Lonsdale to the highway, and adding secondary suites and accessory coach houses in single family areas.
- Some residential zones and mixed used residential have been toggled and some zones have been amended to give a better transition to single family homes.
- The decision has to be made on how to implement the changes. Should the areas be pre-zoned with design guidelines? The City is currently looking to pre-zone the mid-block area. Pre-zoning makes density bonussing simpler to apply.
- The new map will have commercial and mixed use to add clarity.

Commission members gave their input on the proposed changes to the land use map.

6. Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, December 4th, 2013.



Chair