

**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MUNICIPAL HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER
THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019**

Committee Members: F. Ducote; D. Harrison; A. van Hoek; J. Levine; J. McDougall; L. McKenna; A. Matis; and Councillors B. Soprovich and S. Thompson.
Absent: B. Phillips and B. Nelson.

Staff: L. Berg, Staff Liaison; E. Wilhelm, Senior Community Planner; and M. Emery, Committee Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m.

The Chair read statement to public

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the June 20, 2019, Design Review Committee Meeting agenda be amended by moving Item 5.2 to be considered immediately prior to Item 5.1; AND THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the April 11, 2019, Design Review Committee Meeting minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

4. INTRODUCTION

The Chair outlined the meeting procedure and read the public participation statement.

5. APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.2 1552 ESQUIMALT AVENUE – AMBLESIDE RENTAL INFILL

Background:

L. Berg (Senior Community Planner) introduced the proposal for infill rental housing for the 17 storey high-rise and surrounding flats and items to consider.

Project Presentation:

D. Buttjes (Architect, Buttjes Architecture) and M. Vaughn (Vaughn Landscape Planning and Design) provided a presentation, including:

Moving through slides architect presented:

- Proposal for 131 unit dedicated rental housing. Proposing a 17-storey tower and 2-storey street oriented single level townhouses with front doors on Esquimalt and Duchess Avenue. All units are accessible. Previous option explored was a five storey wood frame building above existing parkade.
- Materials include white painted concrete with dark grey accent colour, folded metal detail to mimic concrete shape on existing building and apply as a veneer on one of the main walls running up and down the building and a feature on townhouses.
- Proposing a 4-level parkade accessed by four individual ramps, removing two of the existing three parking ramps and replace with single entry ramp on northeast corner. Surface parking located on northeast corner. Currently 184 parking spaces, total proposed 242 spaces. Proposing 21 visitor-parking stalls and three accessible stalls at same grade as elevator lobby.
- Garbage and recycling centre to be located in P2 of parkade with staging area at grade for pick up.
- Went over views from Esquimalt and Duchess Avenue on the two schemes and superimposed views from neighbouring buildings
- For building and parkade will have to remove 44 trees, most not protected under tree bylaw, where possible will try to retain some of the trees.
- Playground on far south of site, aimed at children 2 to 5 years old. Upper plaza is a meditative quieter place, lower plaza more active with bocce and lawn space with middle of plaza for outdoor dining and urban garden opportunities. Accessibility access to amenities and every part of the site.
- Plant materials mostly native at alleyway, more colourful plantings on Esquimalt and Duchess and internally.

Committee Questions:

The Committee went on to question the presenters, with the applicants' and staff responses in *italics*:

- What other configurations have you looked at for this site? *Did look at a lower tower but felt site coverage too impactful. Sited the tower to the north to avoid impacting the neighbouring towers.*
- During construction, will the current parking be maintained during construction? *Bottom two levels will be maintained, about 73 stalls, 169 new stalls to be added. What is timeline for construction? At the most 20 months. The parking study indicates a utilization range of .63; many of the residents do not have cars as location is close to Marine Drive and transit.*
- What are the setback requirements for the townhouses along Duchess? *There is an existing setback under the current zone and they are applying for the new zoning and the setback will be analyzed as part of the project as a whole.*
- Details of the two levels flats? *Two level single storey flats on Duchess and same on Esquimalt. On Esquimalt, the lower level accessed from sidewalk and upper level accessed from internal core. What is reason moved from two storey*

townhouse to flats? *Felt the size of units more efficient and effective as rental units.*

- How will you treat the storm water on site? *There will be an opportunity in landscape design.*
- What is spacing between proposed tower and the two adjacent towers. *West Shore Tower is 107 ft. from tower and Ambleside Tower separated by 100 ft.*
- What is colour of glass? *Glazing has a slight green tint.*
- Parking ratio will go down to .79 per unit, has staff done an analysis of the traffic study? *Transportation staff have asked for an updated study based on the new proposal as this increases parking ratio from .63 to .79, which is a reduced parking standard, in other areas, have consider reduced parking where close to transit.*
- Any opportunities for shared vehicles? *Three stalls proposed for possible ride sharing.*
- You show a mix of one and two bedroom units, is there a requirement for a three-bedroom unit? *No.*
- Surface lot on Esquimalt have you considered expanding the flats over the parkade and undergrounding those stalls? *Did have one additional unit on east end but eliminated as felt grades did not work.*
- Townhouse density why only two storeys, seems that there could be additional density on that street as out of scale with buildings around it? *Worried about overshadowing on sidewalk, felt it gave a nice residential character, and scale to the street.*
- How do you get the get bins from the garbage room to the street? *Small vehicle will carry bins up from level 2 garbage room to pick up area at street. It is for entire site? Yes, the flats take elevator to parkade and access garbage room.*

Committee Comments:

The Committee went on to provide comments on the presentation, including:

- Amazing site in the heart of Ambleside. Big site and seems a shame just to put a tower and a few flats around it without considering more options as there is potential to do more with the area and utilize the slope. The parking is going to be a problem during construction and applicant will have to come up with other parking spaces for the residents. Feel the lane could be a bottleneck and would like to see a study on how traffic can get to the other parking entrances.
- A good presentation, very helpful to hear how the structured parking works and logic with access and entrance. Overall the project is very attractive and a lot of thought gone into the plaza and the stepping down very successful with the terraces, child play area, garden platforms and the accessibility addressed. Acknowledge that the significant grade adds a challenge to laying out massing. Think there is a lost opportunity for density on this site, the scale of the townhouses along Duchess as it relates to rest of the site and the surrounding buildings seems a bit small. Support extending residential to the corner of Esquimalt and 15th. The architecture it is a handsome tower but think the extension of the fin, while a nice architectural element, might affect the views and the feel of the suites to the east of fin.
- Appreciate the amount open area available given there is a 17 storey tower and surrounding flats and I think it does create more of a sense of community related

to the density surrounding it. Consider relocating playground element to an area central to all of the residential units to have same sense of accessibility, safety and security. If considering storm water that have ability to become a water feature in the central open space and consider taking away some of the rectilinear elements to make landscape softer.

- Lot of positives: tower well spaced to neighbours with north south orientation to minimize shadows, the expression says beach with colours and massing, and is a good use for an underused space in a transit corridor and close to amenities. Is opportunity to go up to four storeys on townhouses and this will contribute to street character and animation. The tower seems to have substantial setbacks from Esquimalt and if that were pushed forward, along with the townhouses, there would be more penetration in east west direction for neighbours to see through the site. Colour board s grey with green tinted windows and wonder if opportunity for a splash of colour.
- Very well conceived and well-presented project. Unit layout looks great, compact, and a good lay out building in form and density and fits well in neighbourhood context. In favour of keeping the height proposed for the two-storey section along Duchess as daylighting, shadowing and view access height seems right. Parking access on Duchess consider removing for more landscape on that corner. Surface parking lot on Esquimalt is a missed opportunity for an additional unit or at least locating those stalls below grade and getting surface asphalt off the site. Not sure the corrugated metal material is necessary as think buildings can stand apart as from a different time and don't need to connect in that kind of way and think the metal may look industrial, suggest another look at that material in favor of a more painted concrete surface that is simple and in keeping with design. Well-done project and landscape makes a lot of sense.
- Well done presentation with a lot of high points executed in the plan, taking advantage of a central location and providing a community need with rental housing. Accessibility, increasing the liveability of the terrace spaces is well done and cleaning up the lane by taking out parkade driveways help enhance local neighbourhood. The density of townhouses seems a lost opportunity to take advantage of larger floor plate, cannot see three or 4 storeys shading out back courtyard area. Great project well presented.
- Good model that helps in assessing a complex project. The corner of Esquimalt and 15th Street is an important corner for the project and parking lot feels like a lost opportunity and encourage applicant to pay more attention as will be one of the main entrances to the building. Encourage applicant to give more prominence to this parkade entrance versus than laneway entrance and have the plaza feel more like an entry plaza.

Having reviewed the application and heard the presentation provided by the applicant:

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the Design Review Committee SUPPORT the Ambleside Rental Infill at 1552 Esquimalt Avenue; subject to further review by staff of the following items:

- provide a parking plan for construction and going forward;

- encourage the applicant and staff to consider options with regards to form and massing of the flats on Esquimalt Avenue and Duchess Avenue;
- encourage the applicant and staff to work on a comprehensive storm water management plan;
- consider a more central location for the playground in the overall site plan;
- consider alternatives to the metal panel;
- consider further development of the surface parking lot on 15th Street and Esquimalt Avenue into a more prominent and attractive corner of the site;
- consider the potential of moving the access of the parking on duchess and providing additional landscaping.

CARRIED

At 5:49 p.m. L. Berg and J. McDougall left the meeting.

5.1 1286 DUCHESS AVENUE, DUPLEX WITH SECONDARY SUITE

Background:

E. Wilhelm (Senior Community Planner) introduced the proposal for a duplex with secondary suite and items to consider.

Project Presentation:

M. Shalaby (Omnia Home Design) provided a presentation, including:

- Duplex designed to appear as one house, identical floor plans.
- Materials include hardi-shake on top and hardi-plank on side, garage to match colour on house.
- Optimize windows to have views of the back and minimize windows on sides of duplex.
- Proposal to retain one tree.

Committee Questions:

The Committee went on to question the presenters including: tree retention; railing details; outdoor space, light-well details and depth of basement suites; setbacks; parking; and fence details.

Committee Comments:

The Committee went on to provide comments on the presentation, including:

- In general the front yard setback and elevation seems acceptable and in keeping with adjacent sites in terms of scale and character. Commend the retention of the existing tree on the northeast corner and if not removed would encourage the applicant to consider retention of the other tree in front yard. Unclear what is the surface parking material but suggest using paving in keeping with landscape such as grasscrete. Do not support tandem parking and recommend two car parking spaces on each side. For liveability and increased light into lower units, consider increasing the size of access wells and increase amount of glazing to lower units. Consider pulling back deck to the above grade units to reduce overhang and get more light into unit.

- Consider a front yard access to the lower unit. In Vancouver, you could not have basement suites that are lower than 4 ft. below grade to enable real opening windows into the suite. If the District is allowing basement suites in duplexes then cannot have 25 ft. heights.
- Do not understanding pedestrian access from Duchess to back of the building, no description on width, covering or type of materials and encourage staff to work on the details of that in next iteration. Concern with liveability of basement, outdoor space is small, congested with stairwells and overhead decking on first floor above. Suite windows are not sufficient to make a space that is liveable. By pulling back towards the garage and removing one tandem parking space would be able to expand area for the basement. Concern that grass at basement level will not survive, consider alternate materials.
- Encourage a steeper slope on the roof and replace the hip roof with a gable roof at rear for a more appropriate response to the context of the neighbourhood. Trying to understand how grades work, not confident that all of the grades have been sorted out. A cross section would clarify if there were the opportunity to lift the building and allow more light into the basement suite. Review basement suite layout as the living area seems small versus size of bedrooms and needs more thought as to how to bring in light and room into the living area.
- For entry into the suite try to terrace by putting a step half way down with planter to help break up the wall and entry more humane. Anything can do to make suite more liveable by pulling out would really help and bring more light into the suites.
- Every application we see for duplexes with height restrictions pushes the suite underground and left with rooms with light wells. Anything can do to make more liveable and to attract better renters and a higher quality of building overall. Find drawings hard to understanding what is going on, we are here to talk about form, character and massing and all our questions about setback could have been prevented.

Having reviewed the application and heard the presentation provided by the applicant:

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the Design Review Committee require RESUBMISSION of the Duplex with Secondary Suite at 1286 Duchess Avenue to address the following concerns:

- provide a clear and legible site and landscape plan that clearly indicates all the pathways, permeable and paved areas, and sizes of all those areas as well as dimension of parking stalls that meet the bylaw requirements;
- provide clear and legible plans and sections of the building so the Committee can determine heights within the space and floor plan dimensions;
- the applicant to work with staff on the elimination of the two parking spots;
- provide a detailed plan of the access into the lower suites and to enlarge and redesign the access into the lower suite in order to improving liveability;
- investigate potential of increasing daylight into the lower floor;
- consideration of roof shapes;
- clarify the existing and finished grades on the site.

CARRIED

OTHER ITEMS

6. There were no reports/items.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7. There were no questions.

NEXT MEETING

8. The next meeting is scheduled for July 18, 2019

ADJOURNMENT

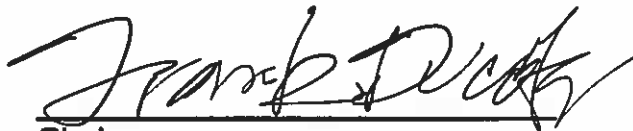
9. It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the June 20, 2019, Design Review Committee Meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Certified Correct:


Chair


Committee Clerk