

Date: Monday, January 27, 2014
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT:

Board

V. Potter Director of Development Services (Chair)
B. Jackson General Manager of Planning and Development
P. Judd General Manager of Engineering Services
S. Johnston Deputy City Manager

Advisory Panel

N. Shearing Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
J. Ross Representative of the Development Industry
A. Lalani Representative of the General Public
A. Ray Representative of the General Public
J. Miletic-Prelovac Representative of the General Public
K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission

Regrets

K. Busby Representative of the Design Professions
S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

J. Greer Assistant Director of Processing Centre - Development
P. Storer Engineering Services - Projects Branch
P. O'Sullivan Development Planner
L. King Project Facilitator
C. Mauboules Housing Planner
B. Ma Planner, Central Area Planning

626 ALEXANDER STREET - DE417264 - ZONE DEOD

G. Williamson Gair Williamson Architects
J. Waldman Epix (Alexander Street) Limited Partnership
D. Shearer HAPA Landscape Architects

Recording Secretary: L. Harvey

1. **626 ALEXANDER STREET - DE417264 - ZONE DEOD
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Gair Williamson Architects

Request: To develop the site with a 4-storey multiple dwelling building containing 29 residential units (24 market units on the 2nd to 4th floors and five social housing units on the ground floor) with parking at grade having vehicular access from the lane.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. O'Sullivan, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report. The recommendation was for support of the application, subject to the conditions noted.

Mr. O'Sullivan took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

Gair Williamson, Architect, mentioned that they had taken into account some of the comments that were made for their previous project. This project has an elevator which was an issue in their last project. The entrance to the social housing have stoops due to the grade change. They looked at the issue of blinds to add more privacy in the units and they found ones with a dual operation so they will pull up or down. Mr. Williamson further described the architecture as well as the colour and material palette.

Mr. Williamson said they agreed with the conditions in the Staff Committee Report, however thought that Condition 1.5 was too prescriptive regarding weather protection.

The applicant team took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Comments from other Speakers

Members of the community expressed concerns regarding the following:

- Alcoves in the facades at the ground plane in the lane aren't a practical solution and can cause problems related to crime;
- Did not support the mix of social housing and non-market housing in the same project;
- The area needs more social housing units;
- Parking requirements can make 25 foot lots undevelopable;
- Important to support the economic health of the neighbourhood;
- The project will help people to contribute to the neighbourhood;
- Diversity and density can help to solve the homelessness problem in the city.

Panel Opinion

Panel members offered a range of comments on the proposal, including:

- the applicant and developer were commended for their excellent work on the project;
- the conditions captured the comments from the Urban Design Panel;
- using blinds that can be raised from the bottom is a creative solution to offer privacy in the townhouse units at street level;
- the conditions need to be less prescriptive regarding weather protection for the courtyard units.

Board Discussion

Mr. Jackson thought it was a great project and mentioned that the City wants to get away from the model of stand-alone social housing and have integrated projects with both a market rental and social housing mix. In order to accomplish this goal, support from architects, developers and community builders will be needed. He added that he wants to find ways to help the applicant deliver this type of housing in the future to address the needs in the DTES. Mr. Jackson said he appreciated the work from everyone to make this project happen.

Mr. Judd said he was in support of the application and proposed a friendly amendment to Mr. Jackson's motion, to amend condition 1.5 in the Staff Committee Report.

Mr. Johnston was also in support of the application and the amendment and thought it was a great project. He mentioned that it was good to see the integration of social housing in the project and liked how they fronted the street.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Judd and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE417264, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated December 18, 2013, with the following amendments:

Amend Condition 1.5 to read as follows:

design development to enhance weather protection for residents to access their units;

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

L. Harvey
Assistant to the Board

V. Potter
Chair