

Date: Monday, July 25, 2016
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall

PRESENT:

Board

K. McNaney Project Director, NEFC Project Team, (Chair)
P. Mochrie Deputy City Manager
J. Dobrovlny General Manager of Engineering
J. Pickering Acting General Manager of Planning and Development Services

Advisory Panel

R. Hughes Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
H. Ahmadian Representative of the Development Industry
N. Lai Representative of the General Public
R. Chaster Representative of the General Public

Regrets

K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission
S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry
P. Sanderson Representative of the Design Professions
J. Ross Representative of the General Public

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

J. Greer Assistant Director of Development Review Branch
T. Potter Development Planner
W. LeBreton Project Facilitator
C. Joseph Engineering Projects Branch
A. Molaro Assistant Director, Urban Design
A. Gillman Housing Policy and Projects
J. Grottenberg Planner, Vancouver Downtown
C. Lade Clerk, Urban Design

1661 DAVIE STREET - DE419982 - ZONE CD-1

Shawn Lapointe Henriquez Partners Architects
Peter Joyce Bunt & Associates
Trevor Lee Crombie REIT

Recording Secretary: L. McLeod

1. MINUTES

It was moved by J. Pickering, seconded by J. Dobrovolny, and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 2, 2016.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 1661 DAVIE STREET - DE419982 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Henriquez Partners Architects

Request: To develop this site with a commercial/residential building consisting of a three-storey podium with three (3) retail units on the lower & upper ground level, retail grocery store on the upper ground & mezzanine level, two residential towers containing a total of 319 dwelling units (market rental) with a common amenity on the 3rd level over three levels of common underground parking, accessed off of Davie Street and the lane.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Mr. Potter, 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. Potter took questions from the Board and Panel members.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant team thanked the panel and City Staff for the opportunity to share comments. Although there were a number of challenges the goal for the application was to create the best project possible and achieve new retail and housing opportunities in the area. To that end, while the applicants had no difficulty with most of the conditions, some of the conditions would impact the viability of the project if passed as written.

For Condition 1.1 the applicants were in agreement with staff and supportive of the proposed change to four years.

For Condition 1.3 the applicants were in agreement with staff and noted that it is achievable.

For Condition 1.5 the applicants noted that, given the constraints of a sloping site and the need to maintain the floor level of the Safeway, the layout is not achievable with stepping. They proposed revising the condition to have the height difference between Safeway and grade be more than 2 ft. As well, when looking at the entry there is a certain amount of width which is required. Thus they requested a relaxation to lower the height to 10 ft. to allow for as many retail units in this space as possible.

For Condition 1.6 a relaxation of the stairs and ramp in the Statutory Right-of-Way (SRW) was requested. This would allow for greater flexibility for the stairs and ramps and ensure access to the retail units, particularly in front of the Safeway.

For Condition 1.10 the applicants requested flexibility for the setback. Safeway requires a number of fixtures, and the proposed setback would push the bulkhead into the store which would create challenges.

The applicants asked for Condition 1.13 to be removed as it has already been addressed.

For Condition A.1.4 the applicants requested additional parking be granted as the proposed parking will compromise the viability of the project. Further to this, the applicants have consulted with neighbours in the area and have concluded that the maximum parking provision would accommodate less than half of what is expected on the site during peak periods. Additional stalls would help to limit the parking impacts on the surrounding community.

For Condition A.2.12 the applicants are proposing that the sidewalk is widened to prevent conflicts with pedestrians. The desire is to make the condition wording more flexible to acknowledge this.

For Condition A.2.15(a) the applicants asked for flexibility in the wording so that the loading bay does not need to be moved, and noted that the same goals can be achieved in a different way. For Condition A.2.15(e) the applicants asked for flexible wording to allow for different solutions. For Condition A.2.15(g) the applicants asked for flexibility since the steep slope of the site should be accounted for. Providing a 12.5% ramp is difficult and would create conflicts on the ramp, so they proposed a 15% ramp instead.

For Condition B.1.2 the applicants proposed providing more than one mechanical room, and noted that this proposal does not compromise the condition at all.

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

Comments from other Speakers

One speaker fully supported rental housing in the west end, but noted that as this is the first large scale project under the West End Community Plan the plan needs to be applied in full with no deviation. The messaging from staff needs to be one of adherence to the bylaws and community plan in order to set a precedent.

Another speaker noted that the plan is already tested and working. There is manipulation and movement around certain guidelines, and discretionary planning allows for enhancement of livability. Further, while this project will animate the block they feel cautious about parking impacts on the neighbourhood.

Further speakers were supportive of adding more residential units to the area as there are so many people without secure tenancies. Additional renters will also help to stimulate economic growth within the community. This project addresses rental housing stock problems and is well done.

A final speaker was in favour of the project but wanted it to activate the street and animate the public realm wherever possible; the greenery on the site helps to achieve this. They also noted that the demand for parking definitely exists in this area and for this site.

Panel Opinion

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

- The stepping at the base of the tower provides a welcomed family-oriented housing type at the tower base;
- Design development is needed to animated the lane;
- There is support for the sawtooth character of the stepping;
- The residential entry on Davie Street and Cardero Street needs to be stronger and safer;
- Relocating the Safeway sign under the canopy would be a better solution;
- There is a sustainability concern over the amount of glass as this should have a high-performance envelope;
- Consideration should be given to the safety around the vehicle entrance and the ramp;
- Design development to create a stronger interface with the Safeway;
- The step at the end of the building should be relaxed to prevent interior planning issues;
- The façade is extremely important as a relentless string of stores is not needed;

Board Discussion

Mr. Dobrovolny noted that there is a serious housing crisis which needs to be addressed. He was concerned about getting hung up on the details which staff and the applicant should be addressing offline. Consideration should be given to parking, however, as there is a desire for an increase of parking to allow the commercial tenancy to be successful

Ms. Pickering thanked staff, the panel and the applicant for their comments and presentations. It was interesting to not hear that there was no concern around the additional residences negatively impacting the area. The majority of the discussion revolved around Safeway, as they are an important fixture of the West End. While Safeway will need to give a bit with regards to their needs, the other points raised can certainly be addressed.

Mr. Mochrie noted that this is an important project. While there is still work to do everyone seems to be going in the same direction. Some things will need to be fixed, but he is happy to support the application.

Motion

It was moved by J. Dobrovolny and seconded by J. Pickering, and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE419982, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated April 6, 2016, with the following amendments:

AMEND condition 1.1 to read as follows:

“Arrangements for the removal of the sidewalk crossing and parking access on Davie Street and restoration of sidewalk upon the earlier of:

- A. the date by which the number of vehicles entering the Davie St parking access falls below 280 vehicles per day, or
- B. the date the General Manager of Engineering Services determines that the sidewalk crossing and parking access must be closed for safety or other reasons.

The arrangements for the removal and restoration will be to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Engineering Services, the General Manager of Planning and Development Services and the Director of Legal Services. Applicant must provide a strategy to reduce use of this crossing and undertake design development to physically prevent access to non-commercial parking from Davie Street. The parkade must be designed such that all parking spaces are accessible via the lane when the Davie Street crossing is closed; (Refer also to standard conditions A.2.2 and A.2.3.)

Note to Applicant: Arrangements will include statutory rights of way in favour of the City to carry out the owner's obligation should the owner fail to do so; the owner will be required to deliver a letter of credit in the amount to the satisfaction of the City Engineer to remove the sidewalk crossing and the parking access and restore public property prior to issuance of the first occupancy permit for the property. Four years after first occupancy and every 12 months thereafter, the applicant must provide vehicle counts at the Davie Street parking access, in a form to the satisfaction of the GMES to quantify inbound vehicle volumes."

AMEND condition 1.5 (a) to read as follows: "revision of the retail units below Safeway to provide entryways level with the adjacent public sidewalk, interior floors within 2 ft. (0.61 m) of the adjacent sidewalk grade, and optimized ceiling heights;"

AMEND condition 1.10 to read as follows: "provision of up to a 12 ft. (3.7 m) setback from the interior property line for those portions of building over 28 ft. (8.5 m) in height;"

AMEND condition A.2.12 (a) to read as follows: "Size: At minimum a 19m x 4m sized station should be accommodated. The physical station with docked bicycles is 2m wide and has a required bicycle maneuvering zone of 2m for a total width of up to 4m."

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm.