

Date: Monday, December 13, 2010
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Council Chamber, City Hall

PRESENT:**Board**

C. Warren Director of Development Services (Chair)
B. Toderian Director of Planning
D. McLellan General Manager of Community Services Group
P. Judd General Manager of Engineering Services

Advisory Panel

D. Godin Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry
J. Rafii Representative of the Development Industry
S. Bozorgzadeh Representative of the General Public

Regrets

C. Chung Representative of the General Public
H. Hui Representative of the General Public
K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission
M. Woodruff Representative of the Design Professions
A. Yan Representative of the General Public

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

B. Boons Assistant Director of Processing Centre - Development
P. Storer Engineering Services - Projects Branch
P. St. Michel Development Planner
S. Barker Project Facilitator
A. Duncan Park Board

8498 KERR STREET - DE414223 - ZONE CD-1

K. Shoemaker Polygon Development
R. Letkeman Raymond Letkeman Architects
C. Sterry PWL Landscape Architects
N. Shearing Parklane Homes
T. Glasner E3 Eco Group Inc.

Recording Secretary: L. Harvey

1. MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Toderian seconded by Mr. McLellan and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 29, 2010.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

**3. 8498 KERR STREET - DE411223 - ZONE CD-1
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Polygon Development 147 Ltd.

Request: To develop this site with a 77-unit Multiple Dwelling (townhouses) with built-in garages having vehicular access from Kerr Street and 'Road E' defining the north of the site.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Pat St. Michel, Development Planner, introduced the application as the first development parcel to proceed in East Fraser Lands. She noted that East Fraser Lands is comprised of 126 acres of previous industrial land, much of which was the White Pines Sawmill that closed in 2001. East Fraser Lands extends from Kerr Street to Boundary Road and from Marine Drive to the riverfront. A CP rail line bisects the site.

The development of East Fraser Lands was undertaken by Parklane Homes in 2004. Parklane has seen the project through a major planning and public process from policy statement to ODP to rezoning. It is envisioned as a complete community that will ultimately have residential, neighbourhood shopping and restaurants, flex space that will include office and live-work, 25 acres of park including a continuous riverfront walk and two major ecological corridors, a community centre, two schools and four childcare facilities and other public amenities.

There is about a mile of shoreline associated with East Fraser Lands. These areas of shoreline range from existing valuable and productive habitat, to areas damaged by industry. Contaminated foreshore areas have been remediated at the developer's cost and to the benefit of the shoreline environment. As development proceeds, generally from west to east, the Fraser River Estuary Management Program approved plan will see a variety of shoreline work occur, ranging from conservation to extensive habitat creation including a sanctuary island. There is continuous waterfront park and public space along the riverfront with a separated bikeway and pedestrian way running its length.

There are three neighbourhoods in East Fraser Lands, the western, the central and the eastern neighbourhood. The three neighbourhoods are defined and separated by two eco-corridors that extend and connect from the Fraser River up to the existing communities to the north. The Kinross Corridor and the Avalon Corridor feature rainwater management elements that reflect historic streams on the site and plantings that draw upon the East Fraser Lands Songbird Strategy.

In advance of subsequent City rezoning policy changes, the East Fraser Lands committed site-wide to achieve Leed™ Gold and Built Green Gold in its buildings. Buildings in East Fraser Lands will ultimately be served by a Neighbourhood Energy Utility, with provisions being made to enable linking to the system when it gets built.

The intent of East Fraser Lands was to build a complete community from day one, starting with the shopping and higher density buildings of the central neighbourhood, referred to as Area 1. This area is the densest, most mixed-use neighbourhood, with building forms ranging from three to twenty-four storeys.

Neighbourhood shops, restaurants, and offices will be located along a new High Street leading from what is called the Town Square Area to the riverfront. The focal point of the riverfront is Mill Bay Plaza, where the most active part of the mill was located, and the design and orientation of the buildings will reflect that past. A community centre will be located near the plaza and a school site will be connected by pedestrian mews to the community centre.

However, subsequent to rezoning, the downturn in the economy made securing development financing challenging for the higher density buildings of the central neighbourhood. The decision was made to proceed with rezoning the western neighbourhood, referred to as Area 2, an area of more modestly scaled, largely wood-frame projects. Area 2 will have approximately 1,562,500 square feet of residential with buildings that will range from three to twelve storeys and with building heights increasing as they approach the Kinross Corridor and the central neighbourhood.

8498 Kerr Street, which is located in Area 2, and which Polygon has purchased from Parklane, is the site that is referred to as Parcels 2, 4 and 6 in the East Fraser Lands Guidelines. The site is bounded by Kent Avenue to the south, and slopes steeply to Kerr Street to the west. A new Road E forms the northern boundary of the site. Both Kerr and Kent Streets will be significantly upgraded as part of the implementation of East Fraser Lands, and both will offer bike lanes fully separated from traffic, as well as be part of the future bus transit network.

Several properties fronting Marine Drive and cutting into the development parcel were not acquired or rezoned as part of Area 2. As a result, future Road E to the north of the parcels will be configured with a turnaround. Future townhouse scale development on the 'missing tooth' can be accommodated independently, or as an extension of this development.

Area 2 consists of two parcels of about 3.5 acres in total with a 0.33 acre public neighbourhood park running between them. It is a sloping site with approximately 10m grade change north to south.

Neighbourhood Park North will be part of a public pedestrian corridor connecting to Marine Way and the existing Champlain Heights neighbourhood to the north with potentially a connection across the CP rail-line if a crossing agreement can be struck in the future. The park design will be approved separately by the Parks Board, but the design of the park and the townhouses have run parallel in a coordinated process. The park is designed as a series of three terraces negotiating the steep slope, with ramped disability access to the top and bottom terraces. The park provides play areas, edible plantings, and community gathering areas.

The application is for seventy-seven townhouse units with a floorspace total of about 136,000 square feet. The townhouses are organized along lanes that provide access to garages integrated into each unit. The southern lane also serves to provide maintenance and disability access, secured by a row to the mid level terrace of the park.

The seventy-seven units proposed will be three bedrooms, ranging in size from about 1400 to 2,000 square feet.

Architectural aspects of the guidelines that apply to this site include reference to the industrial past of the area, the working river, northwest modernism, and the simple forms and structures common to all of these.

From a sustainability perspective, there is a rainwater management system that runs along each lane, the Songbird Strategy has been recognized in the plantings north/south in the semi-public space, the park, and the spaces between buildings. Opportunities are provided for urban agriculture in common spaces and the buildings will meet Built Green Gold and Energuide 80. Provisions are going to be made to connect to a future Neighbourhood Energy Utility (NEU).

Ms. St. Michel noted that the application received unanimous support from the Urban Design Panel, with the Panel consensus on key aspects needing improvement reflected in the conditions in the Staff Committee Report.

Ms. St. Michel reviewed the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report dated November 17, 2010. The recommendation was for support of the proposal, subject to the conditions contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarification was provided by Ms. St. Michel.

- Garbage pickup will be at each individual townhouse.
- There are several parking spaces that will allow for wheelchair access to the units. Also the park will be accessible to those with disabilities.
- Regarding the consideration items, staff are asking for an increase in the size of the deck although there are some difficulties with respect to the trees on the lower level lane. The street trees might also be reduced to accommodate a larger deck.
- There are some technical difficulties in adding skylights to the roofs.
- There are no guidelines regarding the minimum size for the outdoor space that will be provided for the townhouses.

Applicant's Comments

Mr. Shoemaker responded to the questions asked the Advisory Panel and the Board, noting that there are a couple of ways they plan to deal with garbage collection. They are planning to work with the Park Board to have access through the park and as well there may be a central pickup as well as door to door collection.

Disabled accessibility is being designed in conjunction with Park Board. Regarding sustainability, they are proposing passive solar elements the architect is working with staff to incorporate sun shading and reworking the elevations to make that work. Mr. Shoemaker noted that they are looking at small decks on the south facing units to allow for the retention of the trees. Also, adding skylights are a bit of a challenge because of the high truss for the sawtooth roof. They will look at introducing them in certain areas but there could be potential issues with the building envelope. He added that they are working with an envelope consultant and mostly likely the skylights will be added to bathrooms and stairways.

Mr. Shoemaker noted that the majority of the townhouses will have a 6 x 15 foot deck plus an outdoor space that will be either another deck or lawn space. Most of the decks will be off the kitchen/family room area.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Board and Panel, the following clarification was provided by the applicant team:

- It is unusual to have a loading space in a townhouse complex since residents will load and unload in front of their townhouse.
- The preference is to do door to door garbage collection but if it were to become a challenge for the City then a private company could be hired to take care of garbage collection. Also if door to door collection is not possible then a central location would be identified.
- The applicant has been working with a mechanical engineer so that the townhouses will be connected to a Neighbourhood Energy Utility (NEU) in the future.
- The land owner is doing the final design for the community and the pipe has been ordered for the NEU however the timing for the installation of the NEU and the building of the project does not match. The townhouses will be connected at a later date.
- Since the applicant went to the Urban Design Panel, some architecture has changed in order to relieve a certain amount of repetitiveness in the design.
- After the Urban Design Panel review, the applicant changed some of the roofs to a flat roof and introduced some other elements through the site.
- There are four homes that will have single instead of a double garage. They are also planning on using all glass garage doors. This will help to open up the area on the end blocks. They are also planning on introducing a trellis element to allow vines to grow up and over the garage doors.
- The color palette for the project is bolder than shown in the model and on the drawings.

Comments from other Speakers

Terry Slack spoke to the planning process for East Fraser Lands. He had some concerns regarding the loss of the deciduous trees and wanted to know if they would be replaced and how many other trees would be planted. He also had concerns regarding the bird corridor that crosses the site. As well he was concerned that contaminated water would be flowing off the site into the Fraser River. Mr. Slack enquired about the number of dogs that might use the park and if a food garden was planned for the site.

Vaughn Evans asked the Board if there was a school or community centre planned for the area.

Questions/Discussion

In response to questions raised by the Speakers, the following clarification was provided by the applicant team and staff:

- Most of the trees on the site are deciduous and are of low quality and are small in calibre and will be replaced. There will be substantial tree planting on the site. Most of the tree planting will take place in the park and on the streets. New species will be planted that are more suitable for birds.
- A tree survey was conducted by the Park Board and everything south of the tracks will be protected. There are areas on the site that don't have any trees at all at the moment.
- There hasn't been a fish stream on the site since 1910.
- Any water coming off East Fraser Lands into the Fraser River is clean water. The land has been fully remediated. The land owner is about to receive a certificate from the Ministry of the Environment that the land meets all the environmental requirements.

- There will be a neighbourhood park in the future along with a playground and plantings showing the agricultural history of the site. The park will have open grass areas and picnic tables as well as seating areas.
- It is anticipated that there will be an off-leash enclosed dog park in the future.
- The overall plan for East Fraser Lands will include an elementary school as well as a high school and a community centre as part of the central neighbourhood.
- The site was not designed to be handicap adaptable although there are a number of main level entries that are wheelchair accessible.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Godin noted that the application was well received by the Urban Design Panel. They found the approach to the heritage to be strong with the inclusion of the White Pines Mill memory. The Panel also liked that the project was family friendly with pedestrianized mews and a corridor that leads to the water from Marine Drive. The Panel wanted to see more pedestrian friendly areas and appreciated the ground oriented units. As well the Panel suggested making room in the garages for bike storage. The Panel also commented on the bird friendly landscaping. Mr. Godin added that the conditions in the Staff Committee Report addressed the Panel's concerns and supported the application.

Mr. Chandler noted that there had been many design challenges for the applicant team but had been handled very well. He added that liveability would be critical for the success of the project. Mr. Chandler applauded the applicant for the way sustainability had been handled on the site. He added that he would like to see some of the units be adaptable for handicap people with a place to plan for a lift within the unit.

Mr. Rafii thought it was a very nice project and well designed. He supported the conditions in the Staff Committee Report.

Ms. Bozorgzadeh noted that designing around nature was important and that bushes should be considered as well as trees for the bird habitat. She thought the architecture had too many similar styles and wanted to see more variety. Ms. Bozorgzadeh suggested stepping down the building next to Kerr Street. She added that she was in support of the application.

Board Discussion

Mr. McLellan suggested that the consideration items in the Staff Committee Report should be left as consideration items. He thought the architectural use of the sawtooth form was intriguing and reflected the history of the site. He noted that a certain amount of repetition was necessary to get the effect. He also noted that it was a huge project and he didn't get a sense of the finer details with the model or the drawings. Mr. McLellan thought the site would be enhanced over time with parks and plantings that would be important for birds and other wild life. He said he was in support of the application and moved approval of the application.

Mr. Toderian said he was pleased to see the first project for East Fraser Lands. He thanked Mr. Slack and Mr. Evans for their comments and concerns. Mr. Toderian said he was satisfied with the answer that the conditions would remain as consideration items and that the application and staff would continue to refine the details. He also said that pragmatically he could accept that the NEU would be added later and that there would be a timing gap between this project and the NEU being built. Mr. Toderian said he would be looking with great interest on how Condition 1.1 was satisfied. He said he didn't think a change needed to be made to the sawtooth roof expression as it could be broken down into recognizable pieces through other design techniques. He emphasized that he would like to see a more varied colour palette that

would make it more legible and have individual units and blocks stand out. Mr. Toderian thanked the applicant and staff for generally a job well done.

Mr. Judd said he thought it was great to see the development getting started in East Fraser Lands. He liked the pedestrian character and the back lanes. He said his only concern was with the proposed waste collection and how the trucks would have to get through the park with children and people on the street. Mr. Judd suggested a new Condition 1.14 which was accepted by Mr. Toderian and Mr. McLellan.

Motion

It was moved by Mr. McLellan and seconded by Mr. Toderian and was the decision of the Board:

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE414223, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated November 17, 2010, with the following amendments:

Add a new Condition 1.1.4:

Clarification of a waste collection strategy;

Note to Applicant: The dead-end internal roadways do not appear to accommodate City waste collection from individual units. The strategy should ensure that waste can be removed safely and efficiently, and should minimize negative impacts to residents, as well as accommodating the three-stream waste removal required in the area rezoning.

Delete A.1.4

Re-number A.1.5 through A.1.21

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

L. Harvey
Assistant to the Board

C. Warren
Chair