

Date: Monday, July 3, 2012
Time: N/A
Place: N/A

PRESENT:

1545 WEST 8TH AVENUE - DE415620 - ZONE C-3A
Minutes
Motion

Board

V. Potter Director of Development Services (Chair)
K. Munro Assistant Director of Planning
s. Johnston Deputy City Manager
P. Judd General Manger of Engineering Services

Advisory Panel

G. Borowski Representative of the Design Professions (Urban Design Panel)
K. Busby Representative of the General Public
K. Chen Representative of the General Public
J. Miletic-Prelovac Representative of the General Public
D. Wlodarczak Representative of the General Public

Regrets

F. Rafii Representative of the Design Professions
J. Stovell Representative of the Development Industry
S. Chandler Representative of the Development Industry
K. Maust Representative of the Vancouver Heritage Commission

ALSO PRESENT:

City Staff:

J. Greer Assistant Director of Processing Centre - Development
R. The Engineering Services - Projects Branch
D. Morgan Development Planner
D. Jung Project Facilitator

1545 WEST 8TH AVENUE - DE415620 - ZONE C-3A

G. Reibling McFarlane Biggar Architects

CLERK TO THE BOARD: L. Harvey

- 1. 1545 WEST 8TH AVENUE - DE415620 - ZONE C-3A
(COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: McFarlane Bigger Architects

Request: To construct an eight-storey Multiple Dwelling building containing 18 dwelling units all over two levels of underground parking, having vehicular access from the lane.

Development Planner's Opening Comments

Dale Morgan, Development Planner, introduced the application for a site located in the C-3A District, Burrard Slopes sub-area. He noted that staff consider the application to be well resolved and the design issues minor. These issues form the basis of the recommended design conditions and include mitigation of privacy issues including overlook from neighbouring buildings, enhancements to the expression and general improvements to livability. Mr. Morgan described the context for the area noting that the adjacent sites east and west of the subject site are older low-rise commercial structures.

Mr. Morgan stated that the C-3A Policy is currently under review and any proposed changes for this sub area will be forth coming in the near future. The application has been evaluated within existing policy parameters for height, density and massing. The site is considered small and was not eligible for a tower form above seventy-two feet. The proximity of the residential tower across the lane and overlook was a concern. Some consideration for extra height within the range of the recommended height of seventy-two feet could be considered subject to notification response and private view impacts. Mr. Morgan stated that in the C-3A District, residential use is a conditional approval and the proposed residential use is considered optimum.

Mr. Morgan described the architectural expression noting that the application meets the design guidelines for lower massing with a continuous building frontage. The siting of the building takes into account possible future build out of the block face, which could see two 100 foot towers at either corner, enabling good building separation between buildings. The massing is supported by staff for achieving a desirable street wall and neighbourly fit for existing and anticipated future development on this block face. Mr. Morgan also described the material palette noting that the material is primarily pre-cast concrete panels in combination with composite metal panels and is considered well resolved save for the exposed cast in place concrete wall along the east property line.

There are no public view cones that cross this site. In terms of private view impact, the higher massing is placed to minimize view blockage where possible. A view analysis of a neighbouring townhouse across the street indicated that the proposed development will occupy a portion of their view northward, however much of the roof level of their 3rd floor unit will be unobstructed and staff consider this acceptable.

Mr. Morgan noted that the application is unique in that all the units are large three bedroom units including two, three storey townhouses at grade. All the units have multiple orientations that enhance natural day lighting and ventilation. There is ample private outdoor space and a large common outdoor courtyard with good sun exposure.

Regarding landscaping, Mr. Morgan stated that staff would like to see an outdoor children's soft play facility. The applicant will provide upgrades to the public realm in the form of new street trees, at grade foundation planters along the front and lane sides of the site. The common courtyard has built-in planters suitable for small trees, shrubs and a variety of plantings and spaces for small groups.

This application is proposing to meet LEED™ Silver equivalency and staff is seeking further clarification and documentation on the drawings and that a green roof treatment be considered.

Mr. Morgan reviewed the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report dated June 20, 2012. 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 clarifications were provided by Mr. Morgan:

- The C-3A zone allows for a mix of uses. The older uses are semi-industrial and office while more recent development has been almost exclusively residential.
- There is a low scale commercial building currently on the site.

Applicant's Comments

Gerry Reibling, Architect, said that they accepted all the condition in the Staff Committee Report and stated that they will improve the material expression on the east wall. He added that the overlook issues can be addressed as well. The scale of the courtyard is small but he thought that a covered space was a good idea. He also said that they are able to accommodate charging stations for electric vehicles in the parking garage. Also, they will address the stairs into the bicycle room. He noted that there is a challenge because of the slope of the site. Mr. Reibling said that they accept the conditions in Appendix C as well.

Questions/Discussion

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

- The wall along the balcony edges was to minimize the overlook to the building to the north and as well to improve solar performance. However, some opening to allow for views could be considered.
- There is an opportunity to add more glazing into the window to allow for more views and sunlight.
- There is a possibility for some patterning or a living wall on the blank east wall.
- There are also opportunities for color to be added with the use of different materials to enhance the blank wall. This could be commissioned as an art piece.
- The bike room may need to move north to give better access.
- There is an opportunity to increase the amount of bike storage by using a double decker bike system.

Comments from other Speakers

None.

Panel Opinion

Mr. Borowski said that the Urban Design Panel supported the application when they reviewed it. They felt it was a good addition to the neighbourhood. They also thought the project had gone a long way with their solar management strategy and had minimized the interface to the building to the north. He noted that a number of concerns had been captured in the Staff Committee Report including design development to improve the material expression on the blank wall. Mr. Borowski said that the view impacts are relatively modest and there aren't any concerns regarding shadowing. Mr. Borowski recommended approval for the application.

Mr. Wlodarczak said he was in support of the application and recommended approval. He said he liked the project and thought it would be a good addition to the area. His only concern was the material expression on the blank wall but thought that commissioning an art piece was a great idea and encouraged the applicant to pursue that solution. He said he also liked that there would be family units in the building.

Ms. Busby said she recommended approval for the application and liked that there were generous family sized units included in the project.

Ms. Miletic-Prelovac thought it was a nice building and would be welcomed in the neighbourhood. She said she regretted that there wasn't any green space but did agree that residential was the preferred use for the site. Regarding the building, she said she liked the form but encouraged the applicant to treat the blank wall with the use of colour or a pattern. She said she also liked the greening of the lane with plantings as it would make the lane more attractive to people who will use that lane. Mr. Miletic-Prelovac said she recommended approval for the application.

Mr. Chen said he liked the project and thought the applicant had done a good job.

Board Discussion

Mr. Judd moved approval of the recommendations.

Mr. Johnston asked to amend the recommendations with the addition of a condition regarding increasing the amount of storage for bicycles which was accepted by Mr. Judd.

Mr. Munro said it was a great project and agreed that the balconies could have some openings to allow for views but would leave it to the applicant to work that out as there needed to be a balance regarding solar issues.

Motion

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

THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application No. DE415620, in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated June 20, 2012, with the following amendments:

Amend Condition A.1.6 by adding another bullet to read:
exploration of stacked bike parking to accommodate additional bikes.

2. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM