

Date: August 21, 2023
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: In-Person, City Hall Council Chambers, Town Hall Meeting Room, Virtual WebEx

PRESENT:**Board**

C. Okell Director, Permitting Services
T. O'Donnell General Manager, Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
A. Law General Manager, Development, Buildings & Licensing
L. LaClaire General Manager of Engineering

Advisory Panel

J. Carreira Representative of the Development Industry
K. Krangle General Public
M. Gordon Representative of the Heritage Commission

Regrets:

C. Taylor Representative of the Urban Design Panel
C. Vaness General Public
D. Pretto Representative of the Development Industry
G. Song Representative of the Design Professional
J. Evans Representative of the Heritage Commission
M. Joko General Public
M. Moore General Public

ALSO PRESENT:**City Staff:**

A. Mauboules, Strategic & Long Range Planning
B. Cassidy, Development Services
C. Mauboules, Housing and Homelessness Services
D. Robinson, Urban Design & Development Planning
J. Bateman, Development Services
J. Greer, Development Services
K. Spaans, Urban Design & Development Planning
M. Au, Development Services
M. Bird, Engineering Services
S. Farmand, PDS Landscape

2098 W 7th Avenue (COMPLETE APPLICATION) DP-2022-00500 – CD-1

Recording Secretary: M. Sem

1. MINUTES APPROVED

It was moved by Lon LaClaire and seconded by Theresa O'Donnell and was the decision of the Board to approve the May 29th, June 12th and June 26th, 2023 meeting minutes.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

3. 2098 W 7th Avenue (COMPLETE APPLICATION) DP-2022-00500 – CD-1

Applicant: City of Vancouver Non-market Housing Development and Operations

Request: To develop this site with a 13-storey modular apartment building, containing 129 social housing units and parking at-grade accessed from Arbutus Street. The building is targeting Passive House certification.

Planner's Comments

Derek Robinson, Development Planner, presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Applicant's Comments

The applicant will work with staff to meet the conditions for approval.

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

Speakers Comments

Marlene Wickman noted opposition to this project. The building needs a brand new design for improved function neighborly fit and safety. There are concerns with the lack of setbacks, the building as designed cannot be built with setbacks. The tower form covers 25% of the sidewalk. This intrusive and aggressive design is not acceptable to the immediate neighborhood. Putting grass bump outs onto the street is not landscaping, moving parking from school parents and church parishioners is not neighborly, the council approved flashing crosswalk light on West 7th Ave and Arbutus with enhanced sidewalk width and visibility .The interior space in the north side of the podium is not well used. And there are concerns with how this building can withstand a seismic event.

Sean Patrick Finn noted opposition to this project. He implores the city of Vancouver to reconsider this permit, the project's flaws and urban design, transparency, traffic safety and public health must be addressed. Our community's well-being particularly for vulnerable

Individuals and schoolchildren. And especially the women in recovery next door should take precedence let's try for an alternative design that aligns with our neighborhoods character, urban priorities and for the first time inclusivity.

James Cooper noted this project can't be approved with these conditions. There are concerns with the lack of a seismic resistive core in the middle of the building and overall dimensions that have been set. At the end of the rezoning approval, both the height, the setbacks, and the width especially in the north south direction will be very much compromised

Cheryl Grant noted opposition to this project. She noted the following: the size of the building is too large for the irregular shape site and does not have adequate setbacks to accommodate the pedestrian flow from the future Arbutus Skytrain station. The safety of pedestrians, children, and vulnerable populations hangs in the balance. In addition to the building's flaw and lack of rationale for modular building the urban forest strategy has disappeared from the staff report. The development clear cuts half a block of mature trees and green space. Buildings designed could have maintained the green space by being built differently. The current plan does not maximize the site's potential at 50% affordable housing for young families and seniors. This plan is for a building that excludes children 18 and under from entering. If designed differently, the building could house over 250 people in a vibrant family oriented community.

Carlos Estrada noted opposition to this project for the following reasons: 1) illegal approval process and accountability in motion for work for the construction of housing project has been approved despite significant deviation from requirements. This raises questions about transparency and accountability 2) balancing social housing with rational projects choices. Supporting social housing is essential but it should not be at the expense of common sense and community work. The focus should be on developing projects that serve the community as a whole, including working families, professionals and individuals contribute to the year. 3) Critical safety issues. There are concerns with absence of balconies or opening windows. 4) Safe injection site in the community. This approach not only contradicts the established safety norms but also jeopardizes the overall safety to the community 5) prioritizing housing for essential community contributors - such as nurses, medical doctors, teachers and other professionals. 6) Pollution. Carlos noted it's imperative that development project addresses the legal requirements to prioritize the safety and consider the long term well-being of the neighborhood, holding elected officials accountable.

Pamela Rosengren noted opposition to this project. She encouraged forming solutions designed on this site that would allow for families and their children, as well as single individuals to better suit the people who are in need of housing today and better provide for the safety of the people living in the neighborhood. Pamela noted unsupervised drug injection sites put so many at risk - the young school children across the street, the women who are in the drug rehab center next door and other vulnerable people who live in the community.

Amanda Boggan noted opposition to the project. Nonprofit organizations are entrusted by the government to manage so called supportive housing. However, these nonprofit housing

management systems impose a legal policies that nonprofits operate outside the law the proposed development says a direct contradiction to the court rulings perpetuating a cycle of disregard for not only the rights of the tenants but also the rights of the wider community. The proposed development permit by endorsing practices that strip tenants of their basic rights does not align with our principles of fairness, equality and freedom. Let us not ignore the systemic flaws that perpetuate these practices.

Bruce McLaren addressed concerns with built form and location. Bruce noted for security reasons the operator restricts entry to building residents. Visitors may be permitted entry upon inspection.

Recording of government issued for an area for supervised consumption of substances on a crisis is incorporated into the building design for substances to be consumed as supply is necessary and a transaction must be conducted. As the built form has insufficient setbacks from the adjacent sidewalk or property line there is no area on the property for transactions to occur.

Laura Wilkie noted the building is too small for its site. It does not have a garden of its own at the maximum it is now offering a wooden bench at the northwest corner of the building. Without a garden community boxes are offered, the last time they were offering one of those purple gardens with weird grasses coming out of it right on top of the Greenway where people could throw stones directly onto bicycles passing by but that is not their community garden boxes in a full shadow area. On the greenway, there should be a streetcar, this street car is supposed to be fitted into a space where the Greenway is actually at its narrowest at 15.1 meters wide. Laura noted she would like to defend the Bluebell Woods which is a very beautiful cooling and urban canopy area.

Thomas Liepins noted opposition to this project for the following reasons - First, the building should be redesigned as for low income families and children. We can help more people and they will better integrate with the makeup of the community. Second, congregating a large number of low barrier residents with possible mental health and or indoor addiction in the heart reduction building without proper treatment support only exacerbates the resident's problem. The building itself is too large for the site and doesn't meet the city's urban planning policies. And finally, there has been a lack of public consultation and consideration to discuss other types of developments social housing development on this site. The development is too close to an elementary school. Please reject this proposal for consideration can be given to a design that would allow for families and their children.

Jennifer Foster urged the board to reconsider the development permit, have a creative solution that accommodates various dwelling types suitable for individuals who are homeless, as well as women with children and families, which would best typify the makeup of the surrounding community and create the healthiest outcomes for his residents and neighbors

Barbara May noted opposition to this project. She noted this development permit application at arbutus between seventh and eighth Avenue fall short on multiple fronts and neglects a crucial

aspect of traffic analysis and safety considerations. The lack of comprehensive traffic studies, inadequacy of safety measures and the failure to address crime concerns make this development incompatible with the city goals and priorities. Barbara implores the committee to reject this proposal and hold the committee to creating a safe, accessible and thriving urban environment for all residents.

Tony Colabraro noted opposition to this project. Tony noted the building form and public interface hasn't improved much from the initial proposal. It still remains institutional and an eyesore for residents. He noted constructing quality buildings that serve multiple purposes and multiple users if circumstances change in the future. Tony noted traffic concerns in the area. How will it impact the bicycles in the area? Designated parking spot in front of this proposed building for first responders is fine but what if there happens to be an emergency at school pickup time or drop off? He noted there needs to be more in depth review of that intersection. The traffic there certain school days or not is just honestly an absolute nightmare.

Miriam Kappmeier noted opposition to this project. Miriam urged the council to reject this plan in favor of smaller more multi-family oriented projects. Also have a plan for the neighborhood that would have the chance to make a real change for occupants in the long term.

Andrew Keller noted opposition to this project. Andrew noted the proposed building ignores community input, for example of land use is a waste of time and money. It does not accomplish the four pillars prevention, harm reduction treatment and forcing police social workers, medical staff and members of the community to collect, monitor, document and share evidence to provide the right services at the right time in the right places. He recommends the City of Vancouver and the government of British Columbia should spend their time and money improving the health of their residents start with better buildings.

Jacqueline C. noted this project should not go ahead in its current form and further study is needed. Some concerns noted is the site has always been too small for tower, the sizing standards need a sizing core. The project is passive house standards but the reinforced steel structures concrete, mechanical, supposedly power housing that's why don't believe we can do those things as well.

Stephen Bohus noted concerns with the shadow studies onto the school especially in the summer at 9am in the morning. Stephen noted from this research that at 2pm on March 28, there's intrusion at 3pm and on March 25 intrusion on Delmont park and the shadows move and cover a big part of the park. He is disappointed that the City of Vancouver did not use the city surveyor or engineering staff to verify the shadow studies further.

Michael Yaptinchay, Principal, noted, on behalf of St. Augustine School, opposition to this application. Michael noted the combined proximity of the school, the daycare, a future Broadway subway station and terminus bus loop requires a unique approach to create a successful social housing development and feels no design consideration has occurred here.

Michael noted there are concerns with the use of any material that would result in light

reflecting into to the school's playground and potentially into the classrooms. He noted the design rationale of shadowing on the school's playground has been minimized rather the massing of the tower significantly increases shadowing on the school playground; this is contrary to the Broadway subway plan requirements that new buildings should minimize shadowing impacts on independent schools and school yards particularly during school hours.

The school continues to have unaddressed concerns regarding traffic planning and traffic management in the neighborhood, which will be exacerbated by the proposed development and subway station and bus loop. The proposed location for emergency vehicle access at the intersection of West Seventh Ave and Arbutus possess safety concerns as the crosswalk, bike lane and a race center median is plagued with many visual distractions for drivers and pedestrians. Traffic traveling on

Arbutus Street is frequently congested and emergency vehicles have crossed into oncoming traffic to avoid this congestion all within an active school zone. Also, the at-grade parking entrance will serve as the main access point for garbage trucks and delivery creating additional new hazard for children walking to and from Delmont Park.

Ruth Morrison noted opposition to this project due to its potential to erode urban green spaces, diminish valued tree canopy and the incongruence it introduces with our city's core values on climate change. Ruth noted concern to the loss of urban green spaces, and the cherished canopy of trees that adorn the locality. The existing green space at Arbutus and Seventh Ave plays an integral role during sweltering summer months. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, it acts as a sanctuary, a gathering place and a vital respite for all including low income seniors and families living in nearby low cost housing without air conditioning. The proposal to dismantle this refuge disregards the needs of those who depend on it most and particularly during periods of extreme heat when the climate crisis exacerbates. Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge the dissonance between the proposed development and our city's core values on climate change the city's commitment to sustainability, environmental consciousness and nurturing as resilient urban landscape has in the past been evident. The removal of mature trees which contribute significantly to carbon sequestration, air quality microclimate moderation, and communal well-being contradicts these foundational principles. This proposal undermines our city's vision for an ecologically sensitive and sustainable future. It is of note that the city of Vancouver's urban forest strategy of 2014 has been removed from the final report of the DEP application. This policy holds strong against removal of urban tree canopies. Ruth urge the development permit board to delve deeply into the consequences of this application, explore alternative avenues that endorse responsible development while upholding the green spaces.

Mary Ann Thompson noted the tree green space (called Bluebell Wood by the residents) at Seventh Ave and Arbutus should be preserved. The new building will have air conditioning but other apartments in the neighbourhood do not. The benefits of the green space provides shading, a friendly and welcoming meeting space for all residents, shelter and habitat for birds and small animals.

Colleen Hardwick noted opposition to this application. Colleen noted the site could have well supported ground oriented architecture to six storeys for family housing, catering to the nearby support services for vulnerable women and children. Developments in compatibility with the site's characteristics, the close proximity to St. Augustine School and Delmont Park is alarming. It's as if this monstrosity were plotted without any understanding of the community's nuances or the importance of proper planning. The architectural treatment of the modular tower and the public realm interface seem like mere window dressing, overlooking the concerns of the community. The absence of genuine consideration for setbacks and community integration is evident and the focus on the Arbutus Station over the needs of the school, park and surrounding neighborhood is disheartening and tone deaf. It's crucial to underline the provincial government's interference which undermines the public process and our democratic values. The lack of genuine engagement with our community's concerns is evident in this location and form of development seem misplaced and unsuitable.

John Hatzitolios noted opposition to this project due to flawed design and safety concerns. John noted support for social housing in Kitsilano and encouraged bringing in a broad mix of people into the neighborhood that will thrive but does not support this model at its current location - next to a school, a toddler park and the other elements such as the women's shelter and the new proposed SkyTrain. John noted safety concerns in the neighbourhood by housing people with mental illnesses and addictions will require residents to be resilient to the erratic behavior and drug use of others while they try to improve their lives.

Andrew Roznicki noted opposition to this project's location being directly across the street from a school and a toddler's park on the north side.

Nathan Davidowicz noted transportation and infrastructure in the area needs to be improved to support the people living in this building and the surrounding neighbourhood.

Panel Comments

Michael Gordon thanked staff and the public for coming out today. Michael noted the community is at edge for a couple of reasons 1) the last time a building was permitted in Kitsilano above 70 feet was in 1976 and that was a condo at the corner of Balsam and Third Ave. and 2) there has been about 750 units of social housing development in Kitsilano, has been built over the years primarily its been seniors, and families with children.

Michael noted the Sanford apartments on Seventh Ave and Fir St is supportive housing and don't see any problem there, people are outside socializing and is well managed.

Michael acknowledged it's understandable the community would be concerned about the safe injection room given the significant number of children in the area but noted it is a room and not a destination clinic that is proposed as part of this facility.

Michael noted support for this project.

Joe Carriera noted the zoning has been approved by Council as has the height and use.

Joe noted staff and applicant team has provided a very thoughtful response to a unique site and a unique opportunity. The building materials are of high quality and the massing and the color selection are I think very successful at creating visual interest.

Joe noted the off-white colour that has been selected for the tower portion and the risk of reflection especially on hot sunny days. Recommended carefully selecting that colour.

Joe noted the public realm is very generous with large setbacks.

Joe suggested carefully selecting the colours, the off white colour that's been selected for the for the tower portion.

Joe noted public realm is very generous with a large setback.

Joe suggested something more interesting for the south elevation, maybe the introduction of work of light or opportunity for additional fenestration or distinguishing the exit staircase is a different component than the remainder of that elevation.

Joe not sure about the text art. The word Arbutus text art on the Arbutus greenway there is an opportunity for a local high profile artist exhibit there.

Joe noted support for project.

Karenn Krangle thanked the speakers who turned out today. Karenn acknowledged the speakers raised good points including the neighbourhood fit, socially intrusive design and the building look quite institutional, the modular design is impractical, uncleanliness and it shouldn't be for singles only and it is not welcoming and not enough information was provided

Karenn agreed with speakers that the building does look institutional and is not a good neighbourhood fit rather mixed housing would have been better for the neighbourhood as this has been a family neighbourhood for a very long time.

Karenn recommended further design development to make the project more welcoming and less institutional.

Board Discussion

Theresa O'Donnell thanked all speakers who took the time to come out and also members of the public who wrote in to express their opinion. Theresa also thanked the advisory panel members and staff.

Theresa noted the conditions are very thorough and addressed the concerns and comments heard from both the public, advisory panel and during the rezoning process.

Theresa noted condition one - enhanced articulation and articulate expression of the tower distinguishing the south facade, reducing the perceived repetition on the east and west elevations. Condition two - enhancing the public realm to create a more welcoming and human scale experience long Arbutus and along the Greenway.

Theresa noted support for the project subject to staff conditions.

Lon LaClaire noted support for the project subject to staff conditions.

Lon agreed the conditions do respond to the comments around the design. The changes to reduce repetition will address the concerns around the institutional look.

Lon appreciated comments from the public with concerns on traffic and safety challenges, noting the project is a pretty low traffic impact type of building.

Lon does not see any concerns with the parkade. He noted improvements to pedestrian safety experiences, the curb bulges on the street will help prevent people from parking in quarter clearances too close to crosswalks impacting people's ability to view children crossing the street. In addition, the curb bulges present a landscape opportunity.

Andrea Law thanked the staff team for their presentation and bringing clarity to the many concerns. Andrea also thanked the advisory panel for their advice and the speakers who came out today to speak on this project.

Andrea acknowledged it's great to see partnership from different levels of government to deliver much needed housing and the degree to which the project addresses the interior and exterior amenities available to the residents. In addition, Andrea noted appreciation to the project's Passive House certification process and being a leader in modular passive housing.

Andrea acknowledge to Michael's point, the operating model will be key to addressing concerns from members of the public who spoke today and the community.

Andrea noted support for this project subject to staff conditions.

Motion

The decision of the Board: THAT the Board APPROVE Development Application **DP-2022-00500** subject to the conditions in accordance with the Staff Committee Report dated July 26, 2023.