

**THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER  
DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
MUNICIPAL HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2020**

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Committee Members: D. Harrison; A. van Hoek; J. McDougall;  
A. Matis; B. Nelson; B. Phillips; and Councillors S. Thompson and P. Lambur.  
Absent: F. Ducote; J. Levine and L. McKenna

Staff: M. McGuire, Staff Liaison; and M. Emery, Committee Clerk.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:37 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the January 22, 2020, Design Review Committee Meeting agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

**3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the December 5, 2019, Design Review Committee Meeting minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

A member advised staff that the Evergreen Squash Club expansion, reviewed at the last meeting, might impact the functioning of the rugby field, and recommended that staff review the application in that context.

**4. INTRODUCTION**

M. McGuire (Manager of Current Planning and Urban Design) read the statement of mandate of Committee and the chair outlined the meeting procedure.

**5. APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**5.1 2195 GORDON AVENUE, DP GUIDELINE REVIEW**

A. van Hoek stepped down as Chair for Item 5.1 due to conflict of interest and D. Harrison assumed the chair.

**Background:**

M. McGuire (Manager of Current Planning and Urban Design) advised that the District is seeking the Committee's feedback on the draft design guidelines for the

District-owned site. The proposal will return at Development Permit stage and the Committee would review a future application against the guidelines:

- 1.76-acre site located within the Ambleside Local Area Planning (LAP) boundary and is surrounded by different land uses. Site acquired by the District in 2014 and in 2019 all buildings were removed. The OCP provides land use direction.
- In 2018, Council directed staff to consult with the public regarding future land use. Following public consultation an application was submitted in 2020. Council directed staff to proceed with a rezoning application at 2.8 FAR with 217 units in three buildings (167 below market rental units and 50 strata units) with a mix of unit sizes. Includes 3000 ft<sup>2</sup> space adult day care with 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space.
- Proposal is to rezone the site from CD5 to CD61. A new development permit area and guidelines will be created as part of an OCP amendment.

### **Project Presentation:**

M. Chan (Deputy CAO) provided an overview:

- This is a major Council priority and an opportunity for Council to address significant housing and demographic challenges facing the community.
- Statistics show people are leaving the community, indicating a decline in families, missing workers and lack of housing diversity. Most multi-family units built in 1960s and 70s. West Vancouver has some of the most expensive housing and lowest vacancy rates in Metro Vancouver with only 20 units of purpose-built rental constructed since the 1970s.
- Proposal to create housing, increase rental supply and improve affordability while generating a return to tax payers on their investment.
- At public consultation, there was support for the proposal and a desire to return the adult day centre to the site.

S. Rothnie (Architect HCMA Architecture) presented the guidelines, including:

- Purpose to establish design parameters that will evaluate the future application.
- Arrived at a three building arrangement:
  - Building A: 6-storey rental at north of site;
  - Building B: 6-storey rental;
  - Building C: 8-storey strata at south of site.
- Intent to limit vehicle access to single point from 22nd Street, up to two levels of underground parking to accommodate entire site.
- Adult day centre to be located next to 22nd Street with vehicle drop off, not determined location of centre but intent is to have street front location.
- Balance of site for private outdoor space for residents with a courtyard in back.
- Density and height massed between 6 storey and 8 storey buildings.
- Neighbourhood context indicates massing and relationship to Community Centre and Kiwanis buildings. Architectural expression to be reviewed in the future.
- Scale between the buildings north to south is reduced.
- Design guidelines direct critical components with expression of each building to have unique identity as part of a family of buildings.
- Buildings oriented to reduce street wall on 22nd Street and improve daylighting and outdoor space.

- Guideline imagery of West Coast contemporary demonstrates expected level of quality and performance.
- Encourage rooftops as amenity space, including green space.
- Sustainability based on current policy.
- Schematic landscape design provides for quality courtyard spaces and streetscapes. Encourage more than one pedestrian entry to units at ground level especially on Gordon Avenue for building animation.
- Sketches to demonstrate scale architectural character and levels of articulation with suggested expectations on what should be delivered at the Development Permit stage.

### Committee Questions:

The Committee went on to question the presenters and staff, with the applicants' and staff responses in *italics*:

- After guidelines approved is positioning of buildings flexible and could the gap between buildings connect through the site? *Consulted with adjoining properties and the public to arrive at proposed forms and adjacency. Established minimum setbacks based on surrounding context. Goal to leave some flexibility for re-evaluation, but protect critical setbacks.*
- Is buffer planned for school side? *Following what was established by Kiwanis and free up enough space internally on site for sufficient outdoor space.*
- The existing buildings positioned with highest to north and stepped down to three storeys at Gordon Avenue, in the discussions with residents was this a concern that highest building is adjacent to the lowest of the neighbouring building? *During public consultation there were few comments about height on south side. Council directed to consult on two options - Option A: three 6-storey buildings; and Option B: two 6-storey and one 7-storey building. There was preference for Option A. Public support considering more height and density to achieve increased affordability and units.*
- Is density mandated by Council to reach FAR? *Because it is a District-owned site, Council provided direction on housing mix and FAR. This will be considered as part of the rezoning application process. Council unanimously passed a resolution confirming the rezoning application parameters and density as they generally felt that the proposal fit within the neighbour context while allowing a sufficient number of units to create and generate reasonable return on purchase price.*
- Will this guideline affect this site alone? *Yes.*
- Was Gordon Avenue considered for parkade entry? *Yes, but abandoned as Gordon Avenue already takes a significant amount of traffic.*
- Is there a view study in terms of what you will see from these buildings or if there is potential for some views? *No.*
- Is the property planned for freehold or leasehold? *Decision not yet made by Council but preference is for long-term lease. RFP will recommend bidding on both scenarios and Council can see what actual discount might be.*
- What is the unit mix? *To be determined but will provide diversity.*

- Did you look at options where separations split evenly between three buildings? *Yes, but challenge is the parking entry and to retain sufficient width to provide outdoor space for units on either side.*
- Did you look at putting outdoor space on top of ramp? *Had considered but balance between benefiting second level unit and penalizing ground level units.*
- Have you identified passive and active uses for children's play or any programming suggested at this stage? *Left flexible, passive use considered at this broad level, the proximity to playing field at north for active use potential.*
- Access at the north edge, is there any lane for services to the building? *Intent to preserve pedestrian access on the site by limiting points of access for vehicles. All refuse pick up and deliveries on 22nd Street.*

### **Committee Comments:**

The Committee went on to provide comments on the presentation, including:

- Well-considered plan with enough flexibility and guidance that project is going to be high quality. Providing adult day centre is a big win for the community. Suggest not having an open ramp exposed to units above because of the liveability issues and will provide opportunity for more outdoor space. Allow flexibility in guidelines for adjustments in building separation and footprint. Overall, a good plan with the heights distributed well and density fits comfortably on site.
- To maximize profit potential for District add more flexibility in building location and form and character to capture potential views. If good views to water, might want put taller building to north end and step down to maximize views from upper units. Allow for flexibility in guidelines to allow developers to submit a variety of proposals and maximize potential sales. Unit mix numbers should be included as guidance. Prefer long-term lease option as most people are accepting of 99-year leases. Maintain requirement for a well-designed building while considering cost efficiency for rental housing. Overall guidelines well thought through. Support concept of doors on the street.
- The density and height of the building on corner makes sense and support the general site planning approach. Commendable to include amenity space on the roof for residents to enjoy with views. Prefer reduced patios, especially on north side of building and provision of common amenity space, as there is an imbalance between private and common areas at the ground floor level. Support this District owned project overall.
- The municipality should endeavour to show environmental leadership beyond the typical guidelines. Consider features such as community gardens or other design features that would improve liveability.
- Building Code sets environmental standards, the challenge is affordability, need to consider cost efficiency.

Having reviewed the application and heard the presentation provided by the applicant:

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the Design Review Committee SUPPORT the DP Guideline Review for 2195 Gordon Avenue subject to further review of the following items by staff:

- consider a cover for the exposed open ramp into the underground parking to mitigate acoustic and visual impact;
- allow developers room to experiment with the footprint and height in the flexibility of the guidelines;
- encourage the use of common areas as opposed to the private spaces on the ground level; and
- take the opportunity to show leadership in promoting sustainability and liveability.

CARRIED

At 5:43 p.m. A. van Hoek assumed the chair.

## 5.2 303 MARINE DRIVE, ADDITIONAL UNITS

### Background:

M. McGuire (Manager of Current Planning and Urban Design) introduced the proposal and described the proposed development permit amendments:

- Increase in number of units from 141 to 176.
- Units increase achieved through reconfiguring floor plans - no changes to floor area or number of storeys. No changes to the 48 secured rental units and 6 non-market District-owned units. Generally meets the current parking requirements.
- Exterior changes include enlarged balcony lengths, revised roof top area, modernized townhouses, lighter appearance to tower, column modifications, and removal of wishing pond, and three additional parking stalls.

### Project Presentation:

M. Ehman (Architect DA Architects) provided a presentation, including:

- Project recently sold, new owner found the existing proposed unit sizes challenging in today's market with studio units too small and the large 2-bedroom units would not address Council's goal to provide more affordable housing. The current 1.84 parking ratio for the condominiums exceeds expectations. It will go down to 1.31, but still meets the zoning requirements. Added 3 additional visitor-parking stalls for a total of 8.
- Proposing a change in unit mix:
  - eight units per floor, which extends up to level 22;
  - two floors of sub penthouse units; and
  - two penthouse units.
- Added balconies for the studio units and increased the balcony sizes for the one-bedroom units.
- Roof top mechanical enclosure increased for proper size of equipment.
- Extended the second floor slab in the two-storey volume of the amenity pavilion. Changed guest suite configuration from two suites to three independent suites and added higher ceiling heights.
- Increased ceiling height in the penthouse and sub-penthouse levels, which results in 13' 10" increase in building height.
- Material changes: all exposed concrete upgraded to metal cladding, replace balcony upstands on east side with surface mounted guardrails, and dark tinted

glass changed to match clear glazing on rest of tower. Kept overall concept of building central core with metal cladding with tree like design and two colours of cladding.

- Removal of V-shape column as it is no longer required.
- Townhouses designed as Passive House. Minor changes include garbage-recycling area, provide a linear expression using the same materials as the tower and adding fencing for permeability and privacy.
- Landscape changes include removal of tree at entry and removal of reflecting pond to replace with a planter.

### **Committee Questions:**

The Committee went on to question the presenters, with the applicants' and staff responses in *italics*:

- What is driving idea behind changing floor plans? *Some units too large and not marketable. Also adding a third elevator.*
- Did you look at reducing some of the paving area at drop off? *It is required for fire truck access.*
- Did you do parking study and did they comment on visitor parking? *Yes, adding additional three parking stalls for visitors.*
- Have you settled on material for the central tree design? *Not yet.*
- With the townhouses going to flat roofs they will be more apparent, has green roof been explored? *Either a decorative ballast or green roof, the idea is to look visually interesting from above, unsure if green roof acceptable on passive house. Green roof on amenity space is still there.*
- On parking floor, were unit storage lockers replaced with bike lockers? *Creating locker space for two bicycles but can store two bicycles or use for other storage.*
- Stone element where is that placed? *On base of townhouse and tower.*
- Traffic coating on material board where is that applied? *Applied to concrete band.*

### **Committee Comments:**

The Committee went on to provide comments on the presentation, including:

- Nice improvements to the building and the mechanical room looks striking. Attractive building and quality of materials should make it a good project.
- Improvements make sense and support additional height for transfer slab and penthouse. Ensure metal cladding is not a flat panel, some kind Alucobond or similar type of panel system of a high quality. Mechanical penthouse fine; however, encourage reduction in the height and scale to an absolute minimum. Applicant should address roof top treatment on non-market housing to address the overlook issue.
- With the additional balcony perimeter look at energy modelling as significant increase in perimeter length and assuming going to be thermally broken. Mitigate energy loss at all deck edges or maybe reduce perimeter of deck edge slightly.
- Support proposed changes and have addressed items of concern from previous application. Prefer the reduced parking ratio but might have challenge with visitor parking. Agree with materials, metal panel and the finished stone but think stone might add darkness to lower level. Like the stacking of units for a more efficient building.

- Comparison drawings helpful to show previous design and revisions. Increasing the interior amenity space a good. Like that married material changes into the passive houses to feel whole but should add the green roof to the passive houses to address the severe overlook issues on the flat roof, it can be achieved with a passive house.
- Agree that the changes made are improvements and like the extra height at amenity levels to bring more light in ground floor and second floor levels. Like elimination of redundant column and generally impressed with changes and the unit mix helps to make it as affordable as possible. Having the three guest suites is an improvement.
- Echo comments and generally in support of the changes made, increase in units and more affordability is the top priority that all municipalities need to address. Support height increase for penthouse levels noting that it falls within height envelope of zoning.

Having reviewed the application and heard the presentation provided by the applicant:

It was Moved and Seconded:

THAT the Design Review Committee SUPPORT the application at 303 Marine Drive subject to further review of the following items with staff:

- reduce the scale of the mechanical enclosure to the absolute minimum;
- review the number of visitor parking stalls; and
- consider doing something that adds value to the overlook experience on the townhouse roof with a preference to a green roof that matches the amenity building.

CARRIED

## 5.2 DUPLEX AND COACH HOUSE DESIGN GUIDELINES - WORKSHOP

### Background:

M. McGuire (Manager of Current Planning and Urban Design) advised that this is a District-initiated project to improve coach house and duplex guidelines and streamline the review process. The OCP recognizes the shortage of missing middle housing forms, including lower density housing types such as coach house and duplexes, and encourages sensitive infill to allow obtainable housing for young families and seniors. Policies in OCP encourage updating zoning provisions to increase supply of coach houses in existing residential areas by removing barriers and expand opportunities for duplex housing. This will be a two-stage approach firstly improving and stream lining duplexes and coach houses under existing zoning then secondly expanding opportunities to go beyond current zoning. First stage intended to update guidelines and implement those changes along with consequential zoning and OCP amendments. Consultant team working on updated guidelines and staff working on companion zoning and OCP amendments.

M. Roddis and B. Davidson, consultant team went through the proposed guidelines. Workshop is a chance to review guidelines and address whole notion of affordable

housing. Currently applicants spend a lot of time with staff to get an acceptable duplex design. Have not had a big take up in West Vancouver for coach houses. The team went through the guidelines; the Committee provided the following comments in response:

- When I signed up for the Committee assumed only looking at larger projects, seeing duplexes doesn't seem best use of the Committee's time and can be challenging.
- In Kelowna, they ran a design competition to come up with at least three types of infill housing that would be able to fast track and get a permit in 6-8 weeks. Coach houses are not being built here because of cost and the overwhelming process. The solution is a cookie cutter "out of the box" application that the community supports and comes with drawings and permits.
- The Committee sends applicants away because quality of packages are so bad with no dimensions, grades, setbacks, trees, or context. Having a checklist for applicants with minimum requirements for plans and minimum amount of information required and will force applicants to think about certain things.
- Guidelines need to include not only form, character and massing but also a site plan to show way to get to front door, back yard and entry to suite.
- Common issue in duplexes is liveability for the secondary suite. Improvement in liveability section that says suite cannot be more than 1.5 m below grade, but need to relax heights. Everyone pushes below grade because of height restriction and FAR exemptions.
- Need a basic checklist before applicants even bring plans in. Designers will get design guidelines and forms, but needs to be even more basic to have a checklist of items before Planning will accept a proposal. Seen plans where it is obvious an illegal suite will be installed later and will have liveability issues.
- Consider incentives for improved amenity or higher quality design. Livability, below grade condition and robust checklist are important.
- Key for liveability is access to light, either raise up basement or allow for larger light wells or improved landscape approach.
- Guidelines should include direction for inboard spaces with no windows below grade.
- When duplex becomes a four-plex with suites there are typically four cars parked outside plus garage and rear or front yard is entirely paved. Limit the amount of parking as frontage composed entirely of parked cars does not contribute positively to neighbourhood character.
- Drawing standards should go beyond a checklist maybe a sample set showing acceptable documentation standard.
- Like graphics in guidelines but should have pictures of completed projects with addresses to demonstrate successful projects that maybe contrasting but still fit into neighbourhood fabric. Many times people struggle with how to fit into neighbourhood and are afraid to do something more contrasting.
- Will duplex zoning be expanded? Duplex lots are narrow, if wider lots were permitted then could avoid deep and tall designs.
- In Vancouver, there are thousands of coach houses and some good ones. Something in West Vancouver is impeding potential.



- Housing form in guidelines is missing, could consider multi-generational housing where have up and down duplex and coach house out back. Slightly different housing form but could have potential.
- One thing shown are all mid block units, might be useful to look at corner lots and potential issues for other lot configurations. Build in some sustainability options such as dealing with storm water on site. Innovation gives flexibility.
- Make everything count in terms of FAR. Are you allowing for increased density or is it capped at current level. Would it change the exemption for units below grade?
- There is a 25% premium to construct anything in West Vancouver, and then the secondary issue of length of time for permit impedes housing delivery. If extra floor area allowed, even if underground, with a better design solution could deliver more rental housing (mortgage helpers). In North Vancouver, they had challenges with restrictive guidelines but have since changed to increase flexibility and people are starting to build coach houses again. Need design guideline solutions with standardized ways of solving problems, but do not put too heavy restrictions on FAR as it will prevent housing from getting developed.
- From cost perspective, underground component does not add costs, the materiality, building envelope and LEED standards cause the costs. If truly want affordable housing going to have to find a way to increase density on a site. Building a coach house under current building code is never going to get anything affordable. Floor area for more rentable space is only way to get people applying.
- Allow increased building height to allow above grade windows and at grade doors and still be exempted from FAR. Reason for so much underground area is because of floor area exemptions.
- In duplexes allow for blasting variances.
- Should allow staircase to roof not count for maximum height to allow access. Basement suite should include patios. Encourage use of rooftops for private open space. This will help give accessibility in the layout and allowing a setback of guards to the overlook would be beneficial.
- Need to require a clear view how the duplex fits into the streetscape context. Provide elevations in the context of neighbours and the houses across the street.
- Require high quality landscape plans. Everyone's taste in architecture is different but landscaping can improve proposals. Should set minimum standards almost like multi-family in terms of bonding to ensure security for landscaping.
- Should be a minimum standard for landscape plans.
- Caution on being too prescriptive as end up with a specific type of plant and everything looks the same. Feel landscape component has most impact on a property and if planting is replaced later just left with a big house.
- Even with landscape plan if not maintained looks terrible in a few years.
- Do not have any requirement in West Vancouver for street trees and street treatments. This can create and improve street character, something needs to be addressed on that front like a street tree program requirement, and it is a missing piece of the puzzle.
- Two streams, high quality applications should build in flexibility and for less experienced designers have a cookie cutter template that could save staff time in process.

- Aspirational objectives such as greenscape, high quality design or dealing with storm water on site to achieve incentives.
- Many applicants choose outright path but still need to read design guidelines. Should both start with same design guidelines, if follow checklist outright have building permit and if deviate then process with staff for innovation.
- Overall bigger picture how do you get higher quality consistency in the District without formally saying hire an architect? Can't get this in place fast enough to improve projects.

### OTHER ITEMS

6. There were no reports/items.

### PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7. A member of the Neighbourhood Character Working Group questioned why the guidelines for coach houses prevent building coach house on top of an existing garage. It was agreed that using the existing structure should be seen as a big benefit and could have relaxations to allow.

### NEXT MEETING

8. The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2020.

### ADJOURNMENT

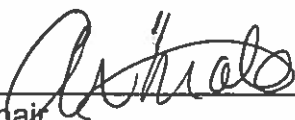
9. It was Moved and Seconded:

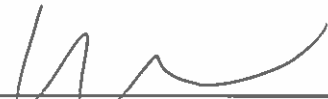
THAT the January 22, 2020, Design Review Committee Meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Certified Correct:

  
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Chair

  
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Staff Liaison