

COUNCIL AGENDA/INFORMATION		
☐ Closed	Date: _____	Item # _____
☐ Reg. Council	Date: _____	Item # _____
☐ Supplemental	Date: _____	Item # _____

_____	_____
Director	CAO

DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
750 – 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER, BC V7V 3T3

COUNCIL REPORT

Date: May 1, 2013 File: 1010-20-12-069
 From: Andrew Browne, Senior Community Planner
 Subject: **Official Community Plan Amendment, Rezoning, and Development Permit Application for the 1300 Block south of Marine Drive**

RECOMMENDED THAT:

1. Council receive for information the revised proposal by the applicant and architect submitted in response to Council’s direction on March 4, 2013;
2. Council affirm the draft Process and Consultation Plan described in the report from the Planning Department dated May 1, 2013;
3. The revised proposal be referred to the Design Review Committee (DRC) for evaluation of the applicant’s response to Council’s direction on March 4, 2013;
4. Following DRC consideration, the application continue to be revised and detailed as necessary based on feedback from staff and the DRC; and,
5. Staff report back to Council with a complete plan set based on DRC and staff comments to seek potential direction for bylaw preparation.

Purpose

To provide Council an update on the development application and to confirm the next steps in the review process.

1.0 Background & Policy

1.1 Prior Resolutions

March 4, 2013 – Council set priorities for revisions to the development application and asked that the proposal come back to Council prior to returning to the Design Review Committee.

November 19, 2012 – Council directed that community consultation begin with a public open house and public meeting, that the proposal be referred to the Design Review Committee for comment, and that staff report back to Council on the outcome of those events.

1.2 Official Community Plan (OCP)

Further review and consideration of the Ambleside Town Centre was identified as a priority in the 2004 OCP. Over the next several years the District and the

community worked towards determining a new vision of Ambleside as the heart of West Vancouver, and after much discussion and consideration the *Ambleside Town Centre Strategy* was created. Council amended the OCP in July 2008 to give effect to many of the actions, policies, and guidelines set out in the *Strategy*. Amongst other items, the OCP directs the District to reinforce the role of Ambleside as West Vancouver’s Town Centre (Policy LE2) and integrate strategies for the Town Centre, Arts and Culture, Ambleside Park, and the Argyle Waterfront (Policy LE2.1).

The District is implementing the *Strategy* through an integrated approach to Ambleside revitalization as illustrated in Appendix A (known as “the Ambleside puzzle”).

In 2008, amendments were also made to the OCP with respect to Built Form and Neighbourhood Character polices for Ambleside; of particular importance is Policy BF-C4 (see Appendix B). This policy provides for the 1300 block south of Marine Drive, as well as two other blocks in Ambleside, to be suitable for consideration of densities above 1.75 FAR and buildings over four storeys if the development results in:

- a community amenity contribution that offsets the increased density and could include community space, additional public parking and rental housing; and,
- a superior building and site design, including increased open spaces or public square, walkways, and enhanced view corridors.

The specific details of these policies may require refinement to the proposed project in order for the proposed development to proceed, and early and ongoing community consultation will allow the District to more readily understand the priorities of residents for amenities and public space.

1.3 Bylaw

Present zoning of the block varies by parcel and includes C2, CR2, and PU1. The C2 zone allows a variety of commercial, office, and retail uses, and residential uses above the first storey. CR2 zoning allows full- and self-service gas stations, and the PU1 zone allows for public institutional uses such as municipal buildings and police and fire stations.

2.0 **Balanced Scorecard**

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	MILESTONES
1.3.2 – Initiate Public Safety Building Development – Police Station Relocation – City Hall Block	- Proceed with and complete rezoning of 1300 Block
1.4.5 – Advance major development applications consistent with the District vision	- Implement and process 1300 block Marine Drive

3.0 Analysis

3.1 Progress on Revisions

At the March 4, 2013 Council meeting, Council approved a resolution directing changes to the project design. A brief description of the changes to the proposal is provided for each requested revision to the design. For reference, see Appendix C.

- a) *A reduction of approximately 9 m (30 ft) in the maximum overall building height through a combination of measures such as reduced floor to ceiling height, reduced number of storeys, and treatment of rooftop equipment;*

One residential storey has been eliminated from each building, and residential floor-to-ceiling height was reduced by 1'-0" to 10'-6" (from 11'-6"). Commercial ceiling heights remain unchanged at approximately 16'-0".

In the original proposal the rooftop mechanical penthouse was a very large, blank structure that contributed to perceived building height and bulk (being almost 2100 sq ft, nearly 12 feet tall, and presenting significant width to Marine Drive and uphill residents). The revised proposal contemplates a transformed rooftop mechanical penthouse of 340 square feet (an 83.5% reduction in size) and 8'-0" in height (a 30% reduction in height).

Depending upon the location of measurement, the reduction in height resulting from the above measures ranges from approximately 20 to 27 feet.

	Original	Revised
Building Height (Storeys)	7 and 8	6 and 7
Building Height (above Marine Drive)	93.5' and 108.3' ¹	68.5' and 79.0' ²
Floor-to-Ceiling Height (Residential)	11'-6"	10'-6"
Floor-to-Ceiling Height (Rooftop Mech.)	11'-6"	8'-0"
Rooftop Mech. Footprint	~ 2065 sq ft	~ 340 sq ft
Floor Area Ratio	2.99	2.90

While the proposal calls for two buildings notionally of 6- and 7-storeys in height, this maximum height is not expressed uniformly across the block due to the terraced architectural form proposed. The following table describes the proportion of building that reaches each storey level expressed as a percentage of the total ground-floor footprint.

¹ Includes the previous mechanical penthouse due to its significant height and size.

² Excludes the revised elevator overrun due to the reduction in its height and size.

Building Level	% of Ground-Level Footprint
Ground	100%
Level 2	95.9%
Level 3	83.0%
Level 4	70.3%
Level 5	62.1%
Level 6	53.9%
Level 7	24.0%

For example, only 53.9% of the building footprint reaches the 6th floor; or, put another way, the 6th floor is 53.9% the size of the ground-level building footprint.

- b) Further design development to create an attractive fifth (rooftop) elevation using a combination of measures such as minimizing rooftop equipment, using elevators with small overruns, and concealing the equipment within the uppermost storey;

The rooftop mechanical room has been reduced in height (30% reduction), footprint (83.5% reduction), and visibility. This was made possible by retaining only the elevator over-run, and relocating all other mechanical equipment to the interior of the building. As the elevator over-run must be present at the top of the elevator shaft, it is the only component that cannot be relocated.

In addition, several living-room ceilings on the top floor have been extended by 4 to 8 feet vertically to introduce a lantern-like “pop-up” element with the goal of creating a more varied roofline silhouette. In addition to preventing a flat, long roofline, several of the “pop-ups” line up with the remaining elevator overrun to further reduce its visibility.

- c) Further design development to introduce architectural distinctness between the west and east buildings;

Individual character has been introduced to each building and this will be further developed by the architect in response to comments by staff and the Design Review Committee. The horizontality of the original proposal has been ameliorated with the addition of more vertical and rectangular facade elements in order to provide visual interest, reduce apparent building bulk, and more closely match the underlying rhythm of 30- to 60-foot wide building storefronts in Ambleside.

d) Landscaping and public realm revisions consistent with the Ambleside Streetscape Standards;

A revised landscaping plan has been included with the Council package. Staff has provided the applicant team additional detailed technical feedback to ensure full consistency with the Ambleside Streetscape Standards.

Items to be refined include, but are not limited to:

- Tree and plant species that are both regionally appropriate and coordinated with the Streetscape Standards;
- Coordination of typical paving patterns expressed in the Streetscape Standards with the reality of an actual site and its particular and varying conditions (e.g. curving curb line on Marine Drive east of the galleria);
- Further consideration of 14th Street public space programming;
- Consistency of application of paving patterns across the site; and,
- Adjustment of front boulevard, sidewalk, and back boulevard widths.

Staff do not anticipate difficulty in achieving consistency with the Standards; these adjustments will be completed prior to the project appearing at the DRC.

e) Design modifications which reinforce 14th Street as the principal public space, including public realm treatment consistent with the Ambleside Streetscape Standards, and improved building permeability facing 14th Street through measures such as storefronts, doors, restaurants, patios, and awnings;

Retail storefronts adjacent to 14th Street have been reconfigured to have their principal facade and entrances facing 14th Street. Further modifications will be made to 14th Street as revisions are made for consistency with the Ambleside Streetscape Standards (see above).

f) Updates to the Bellevue Avenue cross-section including the provision of parking on the north side and potential changes to the location of separated bike lanes and public art;

Bellevue Avenue's cross-section has been updated to locate the angle parking on the north side of the street, with parallel parking on the south side. Separated bike lanes have been removed from the right-of-way in accordance with feedback from CN Rail with respect to railway clearances. The location and alignment of the Spirit Trail remains a high priority for the District and the matter of a viable alignment through Ambleside is being actively considered by District staff independently of this project.

g) Consider a reduction in average residential unit size;

The applicant has reduced the size of the building, increased the absolute number of units, and reduced the average unit size.

	Original	Revised	Change	
# Units	88	100	+ 12 units	+ 13.6%
Net Average Size (excl. common corridors)	2084 sq ft	1771 sq ft	- 313 sq ft	- 15.0%
Gross Average Size (incl. common corridors)	2418 sq ft	2058 sq ft	- 360 sq ft	- 14.9%

In addition, an area of commercial space on Bellevue Avenue nearest to 13th Street has been converted into four streetfront residential townhouses (each of 2-storeys). Commercial space in this area was likely to suffer from viability issues due to only marginal expected walk-by traffic.

h) Consider inclusion of office space as a 2nd storey land use;

No second-storey office space has been added, however, an area of the ground floor at the northeast corner of the site (approx. 4450 sq ft) has been set aside for flexible use to accommodate either ground-level office or storefront retail. This approach shows promise in dealing with an area of Marine Drive that may otherwise be marginal with respect to achieving a volume of foot traffic that is viable for traditional storefront retail.

i) Consider additional public parking (on- or off-site) as an anticipated component of a possible Community Amenity Contribution; and,

Preliminary investigation suggests that the provision of additional public parking on-site (e.g. another level underground) is more expensive than providing additional public parking off-site. In addition, off-site public parking would benefit from feeling more public (versus being contained underground on the site of a private development), and the preference for off-site public parking was expressed by some members of the public during January consultation.

Rebuilding the nearby tennis courts on the roof of a parking structure is being considered and will be explored in further detail.

j) Various architectural refinements intended to reduce building bulk and sense of horizontality (e.g. cut back overhangs, reduction in number and extent of concrete slab extensions, etc).

Changes have been made and further adjustments will be suggested by staff and the Design Review Committee as the revisions continue to be refined and developed with further detail.

3.2 Process and Consultation Plan

The following table describes staff’s suggested review and consultation process from now to consideration. In the interest of detailing the recommended process to its conclusion, it has been assumed that Council will move the project to the next step; in reality, Council may choose at any time to not proceed.

After receiving this project update, staff recommends that Council refer the project to the DRC to assist Council and staff in their review and consideration of the applicant’s fulfilment of Council’s direction provided on March 4, 2013. Staff will work with the applicant to integrate the comments of the DRC and staff into the revised proposal prior to bringing the project back to Council in June for potential direction to prepare bylaws.

Following potential direction by Council in June to prepare bylaws, staff will work to prepare the necessary documents for September, including:

- Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw;
- Zoning Bylaw Amendment Bylaw;
- Phased Development Agreement Bylaw, including addressing construction phasing, determining the amount of any potential Community Amenity Contribution, and negotiating the composition and timing of any potential Community Amenity Contribution;
- Development Permit(s) and final drawing package; and,
- Actions necessary to close the District-owned laneway in the block, raise title, and initiate any required land consolidation.

Date	Milestone & Description
13 May 2013	RTC #3 – Returns revised concepts to Council
23 May 2013	DRC #2 – Committee to comment on revisions
17 Jun 2013 *	RTC #4 – Returns complete plan set to Council; possible direction to prepare bylaws

Sep 2013 *	RTC #5 – Council receives draft bylaws (may give 1 st reading)
TBD	Open house #3 – Public information meeting (pre-public hearing)
TBD	Open house #4 – Public information meeting (pre-public hearing)
Oct 2013 *	Public hearing
Oct / Nov 2013 *	Council may give 2 nd and 3 rd reading
conditional	4 th reading (adoption of bylaws & DP issuance)

3.3 Conclusion

The applicant team has made progress in responding to the revisions directed by Council on March 4, 2013, and the application should be moved forward in the process, including further detailed refinement and review by the DRC and staff.

4.0 Options

(as recommended by staff)

A. As recommended by staff in the report dated May 1, 2013;

(or, alternatively)

B. As recommended by staff in the report dated May 1, 2013, and direct that bylaws be prepared after referral to the DRC;

C. Provide different or modified direction (to be specified) and/or request additional information (to be specified); or,

D. Reject the application.

Author

 Andrew Browne

Appendices:

A – Ambleside ‘Puzzle’

B – Official Community Plan excerpts related to Ambleside

C – Revised drawing package

* Dates are tentative.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

OCP excerpts related to Ambleside

Policy BF-C 2: Support the commercial centres by encouraging residential uses.

- Encourage mixed commercial/residential development within commercial areas while retaining commercial frontage at street level where appropriate.

Policy BF-C 3: Enhance Ambleside Town Centre as West Vancouver's recognized Town Centre.

Policy BF-C4: Consider buildings over four storeys on three special sites along Marine Drive – 1300 block south, 1400 block north, and 1600 block south.

- The size and configuration of these larger sites can provide greater design opportunity, and flexibility to consider proposals with varying height is considered to be in the public interest.
- Notwithstanding building guidelines applicable in Ambleside, buildings on these special sites shall remain at two storeys as provided for in the zoning bylaw and increases in height would be considered as part of a rezoning application for specific site development.
- Any such application shall include an illustration of the development that could occur within the same four storey height and Floor Area Ratio of 1.75 that could be approved on sites elsewhere in Ambleside. A process of preliminary evaluation of the development proposal in comparison to this standard shall occur involving the local residential and business community and advisory committees of Council. Based upon that preliminary assessment, Council will decide whether to proceed with further review and formal consideration of bylaw amendments and development permits.
- Height in excess of four storeys would only be considered if it resulted in a superior building and site design, including increased open spaces or public squares, walkways and enhanced view corridors. A variation in FAR above 1.75 would only be considered in relation to offsetting the cost of providing assets such as community space for an art gallery, civic meeting space, additional public parking and rental housing.
- The site specific public amenity contribution for inclusion in the new zoning would be negotiated as part of the application.

Policy BF-C 4.5: Enhance Ambleside Town Centre's sense of place and uniqueness, including its growing role as a home for civic and cultural activities.

- Provide multiple opportunities for community meeting places and the use of streets and plazas as venues for civic events, including extended open spaces and landscaping on 14th Street and 17th Street below Marine Drive and civic spaces on the larger special development sites identified in Policy BF-C4. Such civic streets would be beautified and provide visual connections to the waterfront recreation and cultural facilities, but remain as normal traffic streets except for occasional community events. Access and use of adjacent private lands would form part of negotiations during rezoning applications.

Policy BF-C 4.6: Strengthen the connections between the waterfront and the Town Centre, with increased cultural and recreational activity and stronger functional links.

- Encourage commercial activities on the north/south streets to increase pedestrian interest and activity, and to draw people both from the waterfront and down to the waterfront

Policy BF-C 4.8: Provide street design improvements and parking facilities that complement and enhance the Ambleside Town Centre.