

December 5, 2013

Staff Notes: Eden Place Resident Meeting with Milliken Developments (held immediately after the Open House for Maison Seniors Living (825 Taylor Way and 707 Keith Road))

Council Members Present: Craig Cameron, Bill Soprovich & Mary Ann Booth

Residents Present: six

Staff Present: Lisa Berg, Bob Sokol

Development Team: Don Milliken, Kate Milliken-Binns, Ron Poon (project architect), Gerry Eckford (project landscape architect) and other consultants

Start of meeting: 8:05 pm

Don Milliken started the meeting by thanking those who were able to attend the informal meeting after the Open House and that he and his development team were there to respond to any unanswered questions.

Resident: Have you done an evaluation study (projection/proforma) on ROI (Return on Investment) etc.? What is the revenue projected to charge for memory and assisted living care? Want verified numbers otherwise it's not credible.

Resident: What are the projected monthly costs to residents?

D. Milliken: If you are asking about monthly charges, the starting (base) rate is \$5,000 to \$5,500 per month regardless if a person is there for memory care or assisted living.

Resident: You must have an idea of the minimum amount of development you need for the project to be financially viable. If I were the developer I would go for as much as I could.

C. Cameron: This isn't a court of law and he doesn't have to prove out the numbers.

Sokol: As an example Don, what are you charging for your facility you just opened in Calgary?

D. Milliken: It's the same price. The wild card is how much care is required by a resident. Don gave an example of his own father who needed a very high level of care and needed help with everything (bathing, eating, dressing, etc.). High level of care needs a high level of organization. Sunrise in North Vancouver was \$10,000 a month because he needed so much care. More care and more supervision adds to the rates, thus someone who needs a lot of care could be over \$10,000 a month; the average is around \$6,000 to \$7,000 a month.

Resident: What are the average numbers of personnel?

D. Milliken: It varies during the day and over night. Using Calgary as an example, Don said it is a slightly smaller facility and when they first opened they started with 25 care workers. The maximum number of care workers is 35 during the day and they find most of their residents sleep at night, so there are around 5 care workers over night.

Resident: What if there is a fire? With only 5 people working, how does that work?

D. Milliken: That's what the Fire Department and buildings/safety codes are for. No one would logically staff a building with 25 people over night just in case there is a fire.

Resident: Land values will be different. Higher FSR means the land is worth more. Lower FSR means land is worth less. Did you do a "break even" study? How much room do you have to make the project work financially? The economies of scale is there, have you figured this out?

D. Milliken: We approach it differently than that. We pay the District CACs (Community Amenity Contributions) that we are currently negotiating, in addition to land purchase price. We think our proforma works well. We are not building beyond what we think our costs are. Costs include cost of land, cost of the building, spending money on things that will benefit the neighbours (such as extra landscaping and excavation costs to lower the building into the grade).

Resident: Why three-times more FAR than any surrounding (land use)? (i.e 1.0 FAR)

D. Milliken: That's the calculation that results from trying to create this type of residential facility, and the number of people that would live there.

Resident: There's as much building as there is land (at 1.0 FAR).

D. Milliken: We cannot significantly reduce the density or it will not work economically and it won't work for our community.

Resident: Can you go smaller? Can you give a comparison?

K. Milliken-Binns: The proposal is smaller than other similar facilities in the area.

Resident: Those are all around commercial areas. You are proposing to be 18 feet from the rear property line.

R. Poon: The building is actually 40' away from the property line.

G. Eckford: We typically don't measure setbacks from outdoor areas, plus the outdoor area is much lower than your property.

Resident: The outdoor area will have people in it and using it, making noise.

K. Milliken-Binns: The rear area is designated for use by the higher-level memory care residents, not the assisted living residents.

Resident: Folks will be coming out all the time of the day. On regular occasions people will be outside making noise; it's a regular part of the function.

G. Eckford: It's also next to Taylor Way, which would act as a sound buffer. Outdoor conversations would be less acoustic than noise coming from Taylor Way.

D. Milliken: Sunrise in North Vancouver is a quiet place. The lower level outdoor area is for memory care only, plus they like a confined environment so it's "enclosed." Plus there is a huge wall and trees above it and it is lower down from your property. The balconies and other areas out front are for the assisted living people.

Resident: Inglewood is 0.6 FAR. Smaller scale. This is too big. Too much mass. You're setting a precedent.

D. Milliken: What (FAR) would you support?

Resident: 0.35 FAR. Developers would never say that less would work. We face the southeast side. Trees 25 feet tall means we are going to get less sun. Have you done a sun study?

D. Milliken: You have a wall of trees now. We are adding in and supplementing the existing trees which are much higher. A lot of trees will be removed where the building is going, which will open up the sun. Screening is what you wanted. We have not done such a study (as sun study).

K. Milliken-Binns: Are you concerned about too many trees?

Resident: I'm concerned about the amount of sun.

G. Eckford: The initial concern was blocking visibility of the building. So we focused on giving you a visible screen. Large trees that are existing and will remain will cast a much longer shadow than anything we plant at 25 feet to provide a visual screen. We can do a shadow analysis.

Resident: We just live there and want to know.

Resident: The building should be accepted on its own (merit). Not the trees or the screening.

Resident: We are concerned with the change in zoning and the values to properties. This is the beginning of the demise of Taylor Way. People will want to escape. It will

become everything but a single family neighbourhood. We are concerned about this. Is this the start of spot zoning Taylor Way? Is this another Ambleside?

G. Eckford: This is not accessed from Taylor Way, so it is very different.

Resident: Taylor Way is “ground zero” for the area. There should be a long-term (land use) study for Taylor Way. Park Royal, across from The Bay, the White Spot site, we are locking ourselves in. Think ahead 5 years. BC Ferries, Translink, the Ministry should be involved. It (the development) shouldn’t be here, it should be “way out.” The standard of living in West Vancouver is dropping. Our lifestyles have changed. Neighbours for 20 to 30 years are thinking of moving to Victoria. West Van is not reasonably thinking of a way to preserve our lifestyle.

C. Cameron: The population in West Van hasn’t changed in 12 years. The traffic on Taylor Way isn’t from West Vancouver residents. It’s from outside West Van. The traffic that would be generated from this development is a drop in the bucket.

Resident: If the population hasn’t changed, where is it coming from and then where is the demand coming from?

B. Sokol: Demographics change, we are a community that is getting older. Household sizes are trending smaller. A lot of the new houses you see being built are replacement houses on existing lots. A project like this is largely for people that already live here and want to stay.

Resident: It’s Evelyn. It’s Park Royal. We’ll spot zone our way up Taylor Way.

C. Cameron: There’s no plan to spot zone Taylor Way. There’s no plan to build up Taylor Way. Yes, Council recognizes the concerns.

B. Soprovich: We turned down a different development proposal at Taylor Way and Keith Road (the north east corner). One wonders if planning on the west side is needed. Should or shouldn’t it be a corridor? It has affect on the neighbours. Planning would have to come to Council with these thoughts. Council needs to keep an open mind. The DRC (Design Review Committee) supported the last round of changes. Is there an expectation even if trees are in place, what is the gut feeling of what this building will do to Eden Place?

Resident: It will change our cul-de-sac’s liveability.

B. Soprovich: How? What will cause this?

Resident: There will be a 24/7 business that will be 18 to 45 feet away. The lighting. Even if there are trees, there will be noise. It will affect property values and how?

Resident: A neighbour who listed their property for sale had to disclose this proposal and the person backed out. They had to take a loss in (the next) offer. 100 people living next to you in a big complex. This was an information meeting. At the meeting that was held last spring, most people were very upset.

B. Soprovich: Things change. Buildings go in over time, but assessments keep going up. I know right now it is hard to understand and accept this.

Resident: 15 to 20 feet of the building is visible above grade.

D. Milliken: But it won't be visible because of the trees.

B. Soprovich: What will you see in your backyard?

Resident: It's more from inside from the second floor, we will see the building.

K. Milliken-Binns & G. Eckford: We are always open to fixing the location and placement of trees and work with you. It's hard to figure all of this out on plans, but we can easily fine tune the location when the crane is there putting in trees.

Resident: So you're saying that you are dumping a huge building next to single family dwellings and planting trees to hide it.

G. Eckford: No. That is not what we are saying. The building stands on its own architectural merit, plus we are screening it.

Resident: Do you have a (physical) model showing the building in context with the neighbour's houses.

D. Milliken: We used photo studies to show what it will look like. We've done photos, images and cross sections to convey the same information.

Resident: The DRC said you should have a model done with surrounding homes.

Resident: Are you going to do the model?

D. Milliken: Will it make a difference to this dialogue? If I thought it would I would do it. Instead, we have done all the photos that we were asked to do by residents at an earlier meeting.

Resident: The neighbours think this is too big. Do you care?

D. Milliken: Yes I do. But I can't meet the demands of each neighbour.

Resident: Why is Council so supportive of this?

B. Soprovich: Council has to keep an open mind. No decisions have been made. Council has only said to go consult with the neighbours.

C. Cameron: Some think only no project is only acceptable. Council will have to look at a balance.

B. Soprovich: There's probably no win-win here. Eden Place is a charming place. So what is it, if anything, that would satisfy you?

Resident: Reduce the density. Take the top floor off. This is a precedent. It will go up Taylor Way. Can you say no more (rezonings) up Taylor Way?

C. Cameron: No. We cannot block the decision making of any future Council. Don has said in not so many words that he can't dramatically reduce the density or take off the top floor and have the project still work (economically).

M. Booth: What else is up Taylor Way that could redevelop? There's the synagogue, Evelyn, Inglewood...aside from assembling parcels what is there?

B. Sokol: Assembly would be required. The Ministry of Transportation will limit access from Taylor Way, so this limits development.

Resident: But the entrance (to this project) is so close to Taylor Way you can't really say that. It's practically right there. It will cause problems.

Resident: If this goes ahead, what zone will it become? What are other facilities zoned?

L. Berg: This site would become what is called a "Comprehensive Development Zone" that is specific to the site. There are approximately 50 Comprehensive Development zones in the Zoning Bylaw now that specifically zone sites for unique uses. The only site zoned PH1 (Private Hospital 1) is Inglewood. The only site zoned PH2 (Private Hospital 2) is Altamont. Every other care centre is in a unique CD zone, including CD5, CD6, CD25 and CD36 (for example).

Resident: But those other sites are around commercially zoned properties.

L. Berg: Not necessarily. They are around a variety of things, including single family residential.

B. Sokol: This is why we're discussing including covenants as part of the rezoning such as tree retention and operable blinds. A CD zone is very specific to this property and would only allow this type of development, unless it was rezoned again in the future.

C. Cameron: Promises get made and not followed through. It's your job (the residents) to identify these concerns.

B. Soprovich: Development happens and little things get left out. The value in being next to development is getting perks for the neighbours.

D. Milliken: One unusual thing here is the landscape screening will happen early as it's the only way to do it. But you have to be happy with it.

G. Eckford: We can't crane trees over the building after it is built, thus the (larger) trees will be planted after excavation rather than after construction. So you will have a 2 year growing period on these trees right away.

B. Soprovich: You can meet with the neighbours before the trees get cut down.

G. Eckford: Yes of course. The first thing that will happen is the hoarding will go up (fencing to separate and protect trees to be retained) and stays up during construction. If the hoarding fencing goes down or a machine is working inside a hoarded area, you should call city hall. We are happy to be on site when trees are installed.

Resident: You've asked us to compromise between something or nothing, and my (compromise) is trees.

C. Cameron: You offered a no-project offer. Developer has said in not so many words he cannot take 1/3 or whatever FAR off the project, or there is no project.

Resident: A smaller FAR could work for another developer. You're saying this developer gets it all. The developer is driving the project.

C. Cameron: Fair enough but it's where we're at. Council has to make decisions. We are duty bound to consider rezonings. We do not control who buys land and applies to rezone it. We are not duty bound to grant rezonings. These are the kind of comments that you should be making at a public hearing. Tonight what is being looked at is: can the proposal be improved - yes or no, and how? And then the proposal would go to a public hearing.

K. Milliken-Binns: We've gone from 1.1 FAR to 0.98 FAR.

D. Milliken: We are doing our best to mitigate your concerns.

Resident: What are the next steps after this?

B. Sokol: The next step is to report to Council sometime around the third week of January. Staff will report to Council on the DRC meetings and this meeting. Recommendations will be made and options will be presented to Council to consider

either denying the project, going back for more consultations, or that draft bylaws and a development permit be prepared. If Council directs staff to prepare bylaws, it will take about 4 to 6 weeks to get back to Council, then a public hearing would be scheduled (likely in spring) and then back to Council for a decision on the project.

Residents: Then there are the construction impacts. I'd also like to mention that the new round-a-bout on Keith Road is an accident waiting to happen. There's a pole too close to it that you can see has been clipped. This needs to be looked at.

B. Sokol: We will pass that comment along to the engineering department.

Resident: We are just nervous about the development. There are many neighbours that are opposed and concerned. Thank you for meeting with us tonight.

End: 9:25 pm

Note: These are staff notes taken during the discussion and are for information purposes only. They are not minutes.