



To: Richmond City Council
From: Joe Erceg
Chair, Development Permit Panel
Date: March 22, 2018
File: 01-0100-20-DPER1-
01/2018-Vol 01
Re: **Development Permit Panel Meetings Held on April 12, 2017,
September 27, 2017, October 11, 2017 and January 31, 2018**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of:
 - a) An Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Development Permit (DP 16-735007) for the property at 6020 No. 4 Road;be endorsed, and the Permit so issued.


Joe Erceg
Chair, Development Permit Panel
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WC:blg

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following items at its meetings held on April 12, 2017, September 27, 2017, October 11, 2017 and January 31, 2018.

DP 16-735007 – ALEX SARTORI – 6020 NO. 4 ROAD

(April 12, 2017, September 27, 2017, October 11, 2017 and January 31, 2018)

The Panel considered an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Development Permit application to permit the construction of a Single Family Residential Dwelling on a site zoned “Agriculture (AG1)” and designated as an ESA.

The application was considered at the Panel meetings held on April 12, 2017, September 27, 2017, October 11, 2017 and January 31, 2018.

At the Panel meeting held on April 12, 2017, the application was considered and no variances were included in the proposal. Rosa Salcido, of Vivid Green Architecture, Inc., and Chloe Lee, of Bouthouse Design Group, Inc., provided a brief presentation, noting: (i) the house would have six bedrooms and a secondary suite with two bedrooms; and (ii) the house would be located at the western portion of the site to minimize impacts to the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), which would be enhanced with native planting.

Alex Sartori, of Sartori Environmental Services, reviewed the key findings of the “Biologist’s Environmental Assessment”, recommending that a redefined ESA be enhanced and maintained in perpetuity; (ii) protective fencing be installed; (iii) invasive plant species be removed; (iii) native species be planted; and (iv) the ESA be irrigated for long-term maintenance.

Staff advised that the Arborist’s Report and Biologist’s Report recommendations focused on protecting, preserving and enhancing the most valuable environmental assets. A required legal agreement would ensure that the ESA would be retained, enhanced and maintained in perpetuity.

Sam Burlo addressed the Panel, expressing concerns regarding: (i) the ESA designation not being warranted due to the soil quality; (ii) drainage problems and impact to the environment caused by grade difference between the property and road; and (iii) Birch trees as invasive and having a short life span and could be replaced with Cherry trees.

Helmut Kramer addressed the Panel, expressing concern regarding: (i) paved area in the adjacent property to the north; (ii) the proposed house size; and (iii) the extent of proposed paving.

Gerhard Meuter addressed the Panel, expressing concern regarding: (i) the proposed house size; and (ii) increased site grading causing flooding of neighbouring properties during winter.

The Panel referred the application back to staff for further discussions with the applicant to:

1. Consider redesigning the proposed development to minimize its encroachment into the ESA.
2. Investigate and address potential impacts of the proposed development to neighbouring properties’ drainage.

3. Review and reconcile data provided by staff and the applicant regarding the extent of the proposed development's impacts to the ESA.
4. Clarify the rationale for the proposed location of the septic field.
5. Further explain how the proposed landscaping would enhance the redefined ESA and mitigate the development's impacts to the ESA.

Subsequent to the April 12, 2017 Panel meeting and separate from the Development Permit application, on May 17, 2017 Council adopted a bylaw that introduced maximum farm home plate area and maximum house size restrictions into the Agriculture zones.

At the Panel meeting held on September 27, 2017, the revised application was considered and a variance was included in the proposal for an increased farm home plate size as a result of the changes to the AG1 zone. Stephen Sims, of Sartori Environmental Inc., and Ms. Lee, briefed the Panel on changes made to the proposal, noting:

- The size of the house was reduced to comply with the recent changes to maximum house size in the AG1 zone.
- The south driveway was removed and replaced with approximately 550 square meters of new ESA planting.
- Hard surfaces and structures were removed from the septic field design, which would be covered with grass.
- The previously proposed porte cochere was removed.
- Proposed Birch trees were replaced with native Cherry trees.
- Native species are proposed for all plantings on the ESA.

In response to Panel queries, Ms. Lee and Mr. Sims noted: (i) ESA planting would provide more suitable habitat for insects, birds and animals; and (ii) invasive species would be removed.

Staff noted: (i) significant revisions to the design included reducing paving and increasing ESA planting by approximately 6,000 square feet; (ii) staff supported the farm home plate size variance request as the application was received in 2016 prior to the enactment in 2017 of bylaws related to the farm home plate area and the house size has been reduced to comply with the new bylaw; and (iii) staff requested the driveway be located as far south as possible to minimize vehicular conflict at the intersection of No. 4 Road and Westminster Highway which has contributed to the larger farm home plate area.

In response to Panel queries, staff noted that: (i) relocating the house closer to No. 4 Road and reducing driveway area would reduce the home plate area; (ii) the paved area at the garage was reduced as much as possible; (iii) permeable paving was proposed for infiltration; (iv) moving the house to the minimum required setback from No. 4 Road would impact the proposed native planting buffer along No. 4 Road; and (v) the project's environmental consultant could assess the benefits of relocating the house in terms of potential increase and enhancement of ESA.

Anne Lerner expressed appreciation for the Panel's comments to ensure that the applicant complies with the City's maximum farm home plate area; which would positively impact future applicants' compliance to the recently enacted City bylaw related to the farm home plate area.

At the Panel meeting held on October 11, 2017, the application was referred back to staff to provide the project design team more time to work with staff for the purpose of investigating opportunities for further changes to the design of the proposed development to eliminate the proposed variance to the City's maximum farm home plate area.

At the Panel meeting held on January 31, 2018, the revised application was considered and no variances were included in the proposal. Richard Zhang, of Bouthouse Design Group Inc., and Mr. Sartori, briefed the Panel on changes made to the proposal, noting:

- The reduced house and farm home plate area now fully comply with the AG1 zone.
- The house and septic field were shifted west to reduce impacts on the ESA.
- The septic field design was simplified and would be covered with grass.
- The driveway was moved, but is still south of the mid-point of the lot.
- The grading plan was adjusted.
- The vegetated portion of the ESA has been increased from 27 percent to 60 percent.
- Birch trees were no longer proposed in response to public comments.
- The ESA is proposed to be planted with native species, protected fencing, irrigated, and an invasive plant species management plan is proposed.

In response to Panel queries, Mr. Sartori advised that: (i) the three-year monitoring by a Qualified Environmental Professional is intended to ensure new plant survival and invasive plant control in the ESA; and (ii) in lieu of Birch trees, a dense mix of native riparian trees, shrubs and ground cover species are proposed to be planted in the ESA.

Staff noted that: (i) the applicant has worked with staff to address the Panel's concerns; (ii) the revised proposal has significantly increased the extent of planting on the subject site; and (iii) the City will hold the landscape security for the duration of the three-year monitoring period for the ESA landscaping area.

No correspondence was submitted to the Panel regarding the Development Permit application.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.