



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: Richmond City Council

Date: October 2, 2019

From: Cecilia Achiam
Chair, Development Permit Panel

File: DP 18-829140

Re: **Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on September 11, 2019**

Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of a Development Permit (DP 18-829140) for the property at 8820, 8840, 8860, 8880, 8900, 8911 and 8931 Spires Road and the surplus portion of the Spires Road road allowance be endorsed, and the Permit so issued.

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Chair, Development Permit Panel
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SB:blg

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on September 11, 2019

DP 18-829140 – PLLR 228 HOLDINGS – 8820, 8840, 8860, 8880, 8900, 8911 AND 8931 SPIRES ROAD AND THE SURPLUS PORTION OF THE SPIRES ROAD ROAD ALLOWANCE
(September 11, 2019)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application in order to permit the construction of 64 townhouse units and two secondary suites on a site zoned “Parking Structure Townhouses (RTP4)”. A variance is included in the proposal for a reduced setback to the north-south public walkway.

Architect, Jim Bussey, of Formwerks Architectural; and Landscape Architect, Caelan Griffiths, of PMG Landscape Architects, provided a brief presentation, including:

- Six convertible units and one Basic Universal Housing (BUH) unit, and two secondary suites are provided.
- Two common parking structures are hidden under the podium and parkade walls along the west and south sides of the development will be articulated and planted to enhance pedestrian experience and in consideration of adjacent residential developments.
- Sidewalks will be provided along the side and rear property lines to provide pedestrian connection to future lanes adjacent to the west and south sides of the subject site.
- Townhouse units adjacent to existing single-family houses to the north and east are stepped down from four to three storeys.
- The north-south public walkway at the driveway bisects the site and an elevated walkway will be installed above the walkway to connect the two portions of the site.
- An existing large tree by the driveway will be retained in a passive recreation space with landscaping and seating.
- Pedestrian access is provided to the podium level through stairs and a central elevator.
- The project is designed to achieve an EnerGuide rating of 82 and LEED Silver equivalency.
- The west entry plaza includes bicycle racks, seating, and potentially Public Art.
- Structural soil will be used for back of boulevard trees to enhance their resiliency.
- Children’s play areas on podium level are adjacent to indoor amenity areas and include a wide range of play opportunities for various age groups of young children and seating.

In reply to Panel queries, Mr. Bussey and Mr. Griffiths advised that: (i) the two parking structures are accessed from either side of the driveway; (ii) trees on ground and podium levels will be irrigated; and (iii) sidewalks will be installed along the west and south property lines.

In reply to Panel queries, staff noted that: (i) construction of the west and south lanes are part of the City's long-term transportation network and lane dedications were secured through the rezoning application; (ii) the subject lanes will not be constructed at this time; (iii) fencing will remain in existing locations; and (iv) a legal agreement will be registered on Title requiring the strata to maintain the site's lane dedication areas until such time that the lane is installed.

Staff advised that: (i) there is a Servicing Agreement associated with the project for frontage beautification and road works along Spires Road; (ii) the large retained tree along Spires Road is a focal point of the development; (iii) the overall size of proposed indoor amenity spaces meets the City's requirements; (iv) the proposed setback variance from the public walkway adjacent to the driveway is a result of the elevated walkway that connects the two building structures; (v) the public walkway itself will have generous building setbacks and access to daylight; and (vi) there is minor aerial encroachment where the two podium levels are connected.

Paige Robertson addressed the Panel, expressing concerns regarding: (i) the provision of parking, noting that on-street parking is not feasible as Spires Road is limited to three-hour parking from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Cook Elementary School parents park on Spires Road to drop off and pick up their children; and (ii) the impact of the proposed setback variance on the livability of the proposed development, livability of the neighbourhood, and pedestrian safety.

In reply to Ms. Robertson's concerns, staff noted that: (i) the project complies with Zoning Bylaw parking requirements and exceeds the minimum number of parking stalls to be provided on-site, (ii) the proposed number of parking stalls for the project is appropriate given the project's location in the City Centre; and (iii) the proposed public walkway is 3 m wide and the proposed variance is to allow for the overhead footbridge that will connect the two buildings.

Correspondence was submitted by Jose Gonzalez to the Panel, expressing concerns regarding the proposed setback variance associated with the north-south public walkway.

In reply to Mr. Gonzalez's concerns, staff noted that: (i) the proposed variance is necessary as ultimately, the public walkway will provide pedestrian access from Spires Road to the rear lane; and (ii) the rear lane is a long-term City objective and will not be implemented through the proposed development.

In reply to a Panel query, staff noted that: (i) the applicant is required to provide a Construction Traffic and Parking Management Plan to the satisfaction of the Transportation Department prior to Building Permit issuance; and (iii) Transportation staff is involved in ongoing discussions with Cook Elementary School through the School Board regarding ongoing construction management issues as per direction from Council.

The Panel expressed support for the project, noting that: (i) the project is well designed; (ii) the ground level parking is hidden below the podium; (iii) the building colour scheme is appreciated; and (iv) the retention of the large on-site tree is supported as it enhances the project and maintains the character of the neighbourhood. The Chair noted the public's concerns regarding parking violations in school zones and adjacent areas and advised that the Bylaw Department will readily respond to reported parking violations.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.