



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: Richmond City Council
From: Joe Erceg, MCIP
Chair, Development Permit Panel

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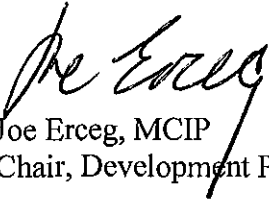
Re: Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on March 16, 2011

Panel Recommendation

That the recommendations of the Panel to authorize the issuance of:

- i) a Development Permit (DP 09-504462) for the property at 11111 and 11131 Cambie Road;

be endorsed, and the Permit so issued.



Joe Erceg, MCIP
Chair, Development Permit Panel

SB:blg

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on March 16, 2011.

DP 09-504462 – GERRY BLONSKI, ARCHITECT – 11111 AND 11131 CAMBIE ROAD
(March 16, 2011)

The Panel considered an application to permit the construction of a 12-unit, two to three-storey townhouse development on a site zoned “Low Density Townhouses (RTL3)”. Variances are included in the proposal to: reduce the front yard and west side yard setbacks, reduce the minimum lot width, and to allow tandem parking for six (6) of the 12 townhouse units.

Architect, Gerry Blonski, and Landscape Architect, Clark Kavolinas, CJK Landscape Architecture, provided brief presentations including:

- The outdoor amenity area includes a fenced children’s play area, benches and a gazebo;
- The two (2) buildings step down to the rear of the property line to minimize shadowing;
- Vertical vinyl siding is tan coloured, gable Hardi-panels are brown, with lighter trim;
- Hard and soft landscaping features are provided in and around the patio spaces;
- A Cedar hedge is used along the perimeter of the subject site;
- 14 new trees are to be planted on the subject site; and
- Four (4) street trees facing Cambie Road are to be retained and will provide street presence.

In response to discussion with the Panel, Mr. Blonski and Mr. Kavolinas, advised:

- A play area for small children will be adjacent to the hard surface area and will include a rubber mat surface, a “bouncy” feature, and a small slide. The play structure specification will be added to the drawings;
- There are four (4) existing City trees along Cambie Road, and that four (4) new trees, plus a Cedar hedge would provide a double row of trees, to enhance the buffer to the subject site.
- The design scheme includes one adaptable suite; and
- Aging-in-place features could easily include the provision of grab bars and lever handles in each of the proposed townhouse units.

The Chair queried what design changes had occurred as a result of concerns raised by two Mellis Drive residents when the rezoning application for the project went to the June 20, 2009 Public Hearing. In response, Mr. Blonski explained that:

- There are now three (3) separate building clusters, and the height of the end units for each building cluster was stepped down, from three (3) storeys, to two (2) storeys, to address any overlook concerns from adjacent single-family home residents;
- The larger windows in the proposed townhouse units face toward the internal drive aisle and not toward the adjacent single-family home residences; and
- The garbage and recycling enclosure, located close to the entry of the complex, is lower than the height of the fence that is to run along the perimeter of the subject site.

Staff supports the application and requested variances. Staff advised that:

- The requested variances were identified in the rezoning application;
- The applicant was not able to purchase the single-family properties to the east and the west of the subject site, but cross access easements were provided for these neighbouring properties.
- Since the original application was submitted by the applicant, the configuration of the rear units has changed, and now features two (2) structures at the rear of the subject site, leaving greater open space along the rear property line;
- The buildings are stepped down to two storey at the rear with limited overlook from two (2) bedrooms;
- A Cedar hedge and other landscaping would create privacy for neighbouring single-family homes, and the private patio spaces are to the side, not the back, of the subject site;
- The design was changed to respond to concerns raised by Mellis Drive residents; and
- No specific request by Council had been made at the July, 2009 Public Hearing to redesign the project. The applicant had responded to the two written submissions from Mellis Drive residents.

Mr. Ron Trenkel addressed the Panel with concerns related to: shadowing; rain run off due to raising the grade; and the proposed tree type whether they will become overgrown due to a lack of maintenance. He noted that, since the applicant had redesigned the project, privacy provision for the surrounding residents was better.

In response to the issue of shadowing and shading, Mr. Blonski advised that: there would be no shadowing in the summer.

With regard to the drainage issue, the Chair advised that the City bylaws require a retaining wall to have perimeter drainage to collect all drainage on the site.

With regard to trees and tree maintenance, Mr. Kavolinas advised that the back yard trees were a smaller tree variety, Yellow Flowering Magnolia, as well as a small columnar Red Maple.

The Panel commented that residents usually provide tree maintenance because it is in their best interest to not allow trees to become too large, and it was noted that a regular maintenance program on the subject site's trees would have to be done.

The Chair advised Mr. Trenkel that the applicant had stated willingness to look again at the landscape design, with regard to adjustments.

Public correspondence was received regarding the Development Permit application. Staff advised that:

- Concerns included:
 - minimum lot width variance;
 - front yard setback variance and potential for crowding the sidewalk;
 - building setbacks;

- the potential for the townhouses to block one third of the view and cast shadows to the Mellis Drive back yards;
 - noise created during the construction phase;
 - the potential for water run off if the subject site is raised;
 - the appropriateness of 12 units and buildings higher than two (2) storeys in the single detached streetscape; and
 - proximity of townhouses to the property line, proposed height, and whether they pose a risk of privacy to the rear yards of the immediate neighbours.
- All variances were identified during the rezoning application process;
 - The applicant had responded appropriately to concerns raised at the July, 2009 Public Hearing;
 - The subject site has been pre-loaded. The applicant and the contractor will be given copies of the City's Good Neighbour Policy, and advised to be considerate of the neighbours and to adhere to the City's permitted hours of operation;
 - If the applicant and contractor distributed business cards, complete with telephone numbers, to the neighbours, anyone concerned with noise or vibrations during the construction phase, could then call those directly involved with the project to lodge a complaint;
 - The applicant has responded to the issue of building height by lowering the height of the end units for each building cluster. Mr. Blonski had paid attention to the shading issue and that no shadowing would occur during the summer months; and
 - Setbacks are being reduced on the west side to allow for the garbage/recycling enclosure, and the mail area, but no setback relief is being sought on the east side of the subject site.

Mr. Ken Sodhi, project contractor, advised the Panel that before the pre-load, he had met with, and distributed his business card to neighbouring Cambie Road residents, but had not met with neighbouring Mellis Drive residents.

The Chair advised that the Panel expected that the City's bylaws be adhered to, with respect to such details as hours of construction. He reiterated that the applicant and contractor would be supplied with the Good Neighbour Policy.

The Chair requested that, before the development application goes forward to a Council meeting, the applicant provide specification for:

- The proposed play equipment;
- The proposed aging-in-place features in each of the townhouse units; and
- The review of landscaping elements in rear yards with adjacent neighbours.

Subsequent to the Panel meeting, the applicant revised the project design in the following ways:

- Addition of a small children's play area with a slide and covered sandbox;
- Specification for blocking in bathroom walls for installation of future grab bars and large openings for easier access to the units; and
- Additional tree planting at the rear of the property for privacy screening.

The Panel recommends that the Permit be issued.