



Development Permit Panel

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall

Present: Joe Erceg, Chair
Cathryn Volkering Carlile, General Manager – Community Services
John Irving, Director of Engineering

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.

1. Minutes

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the meeting of the Development Permit Panel held on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, be adopted.

CARRIED

2. Development Permit 06-333170

(File Ref. No.: 06-333170) (REDMS No. 2777452)

APPLICANT: Matthew Cheng Architect Inc.

PROPERTY LOCATION: 8680 No. 3 Road

INTENT OF PERMIT:

1. To permit the construction of six (6) townhouse units at 8680 No. 3 Road on a site zoned Low Density Townhouse (RTL3); and
2. To vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:
 - a) reduce the minimum lot size from 30 m (98.43 ft.) to 22.86 m (75 ft.);
 - b) reduce the north side yard setback from 3.0 m (9.84 ft.) to 2.43 m (7.97 ft.) for a single storey garbage/recycling enclosure attached to the front building; and
 - c) reduce the lot coverage for landscaping with live plant material from 30% to 26%.

Applicant's Comments

Matthew Cheng, Architect, addressed the Panel and provided the following information regarding the proposed development of six townhouses at 8680 No. 3 Road near Frances Road:

- two 3-storey units are proposed fronting No. 3 Road, and there are 4-storey units in the back of the lot;
- to the east of the subject site are large lot single-family properties; to the south of the subject site is a commercial facility; and to the north, 8660 No. 3 Road, is a recently developed 13-unit townhouse development;
- a cross-access agreement is registered on title of 8660 No. 3 Road, to the north, that provides vehicle access to the proposed development at 8680 No. 3 Road;
- an agreement has been reached with the Strata Council at 8660 No. 3 Road that a fire hydrant on that site can be used for the proposed development at 8680 No. 3 Road;
- there will be a ramp to slope up to the internal drive aisle, from the property to the north, in order to facilitate a good transition between the two developments;
- a landscape buffer is proposed for the south side of the front yard;
- to enhance pedestrian traffic, all units along No. 3 Road have direct access from the street;
- a pedestrian walkway connects No. 3 Road to the internal drive aisle in order to provide direct access for residents in the rear units;
- a full enclosure for the recycling carts is located to the north side of the front building; the enclosure will be screened by a 6 foot tall fence, a row of hedges and a tree;
- the Strata Council at 8660 No. 3 Road has granted permission for the applicant to remove two trees on the property to the north of the subject site; and
- Unit 4 is designed as a convertible unit, with stairs wide enough to accommodate a future chairlift.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding the condition of the trees to be removed from the site to the north, Mr. Cheng repeated his statement that permission had been granted by the Strata Council of the neighbouring townhouse development.

Marlene Messer, Landscape Architect, addressed the Panel and provided the following landscape details:

- a combination of broadleaf and deciduous trees has been selected for planting on the subject site;
- each townhouse has a yard, providing a quiet space, or patio space, with landscaping elements;

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- Dogwoods and Japanese trees are proposed for the north property line; Lilac trees are proposed for the south property line;
- a narrow landscape strip situated between the driveway and the south property line will screen the existing commercial development from the proposed development; and
- a small play area, surrounded by a low fence, includes a bench, and landscaping elements.

Staff Comments

Brian Jackson, Director of Development stated that staff supports the Development Permit application and the variance. He remarked that when the application went to the Public Hearing on July 17, 2006, a concern was raised with regard to the impact of potential construction traffic, but that the concern has been addressed and that access to the development site during construction would be directly from No. 3 Road, not via the cross-access agreement registered on title of the adjacent property to the north, 8660 No. 3 Road.

Mr. Jackson advised that the applicant's original design included an open storage area for the recycling carts at the north property line, but after residents of townhouses at 8660 No. 3 Road stated their concern regarding the potential for an unsightly appearance and undesirable odours, the applicant had designed a fully enclosed structure, and had added screening.

Mr. Jackson reported that, with regard to the removal of two off-site trees to the north of the subject site, the trees in question had been retained as part of the redevelopment of the neighbouring townhouse site, and that one of the trees is not in good condition. It was determined that both recent trees would be removed, and that they would be replaced with four new trees.

A brief discussion ensued between Panel members and staff regarding:

- when the 13 townhouses were developed at 8660 No. 3 Road, having gone through the Development Permit process, eight trees were required, but more than 20 trees were planted, and some of the new trees had deteriorated during their first year on the site; and
- the bylaw-sized trees on the adjacent site to the north were studied by an arbourist and found to not be of a significant nature.

Panel Discussion

In response to queries from the Panel, Mr. Cheng and Ms. Messer provided the following information:

- the landscaping bed along the south property line is narrow and may not support the proposed tree planting; structural soil could be placed under the adjacent paving to increase the soil area for tree roots;

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- the rear units include large south-facing balconies to compensate for smaller yard space; and
- the recycling carts are to be surrounded by a fully enclosed structure attached to the north side of the front building, not merely surrounded by screening.

The Chair stated his concern that the design of the project is reminiscent of other projects presented to the Panel by the applicant. He remarked that there are major projects, on three individual lots, in the area and he could not ascertain how their architectural details tied them together.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding how the proposed development is integrated with the townhouse development to the north, Mr. Cheng responded that: (i) the colour palette of the proposed development is consistent with the surrounding residential character of the neighbourhood; (ii) the slope of the upper gable is steeper, as is the entry gable, and that the facades match the slope of the facades of neighbouring structures; (iii) a full width porch across the front of the proposed townhouses matches the porch elements of the townhouses to the north; and (iv) there is similarity in both the materials used and the featured column elements.

Correspondence

None.

Gallery Comments

Sam Sing, 8660 No. 3 Road, raised a safety concern and noted that children who live in the townhouses to the north of the subject site may be in danger due to increased traffic from the proposed six townhouses. He added that he felt that access to the proposed development at 8680 No. 3 Road “piggy-backed” on the access used by the existing townhouse units at 8660 No. 3 Road.

Phyllis Wong, speaking on behalf of her mother, who resided at Unit #4-8660 No. 3 Road, raised the following concerns:

- (i) a lack of communication, written or otherwise, from the 8660 No. 3 Road Strata Council to strata owners with regard to agreements they have made with the applicant developing 8680 No. 3 Road;
- (ii) traffic on the driveway in the existing townhouse development is busy already, before the addition of residents in a further six townhouse units proposed for 8680 No. 3 Road;
- (iii) the number of visitor parking stalls is inadequate at 8660 No. 3 Road, and visitors going to future townhouses at 8680 No. 3 Road might use the present visitor parking stalls; and
- (iv) the location of the recycling enclosure, on the north side of the front building.

The following advice was provided to Ms. Wong by the Chair and by staff, in response to her concerns:

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- (i) vehicle access to the subject site will be through the driveway of the 13-townhouse unit to the north due to a legal cross-access easement registered on title of 8660 No. 3 Road, secured as part of the development approval when the townhouse units were developed at 8660 No. 3 Road; the safer arrangement is for drivers to use the cross-access, rather than creating multiple driveways emptying onto No. 3 Road;
- (ii) the applicant is providing the required two visitor parking spaces onsite; and
- (iii) the recycling carts are fully enclosed, and a tall fence, a row of hedges and a tree screen the enclosed structure.

Ms. Sing, 8660 No. 3 Road, addressed the Panel and advised that drivers on No. 3 Road frequently take advantage of the driveway at her townhouse development in order to execute U-turns. She queried whether the City would consider installing a gate at the townhouse development to limit the number of U-turns.

The Chair stated that a gate on the neighbouring property is not something the Development Permit Panel could consider as part of this application. He remarked that No. 3 Road is an arterial road and therefore busier than side streets. He suggested that Ms. Sing speak with Planning and Development staff in order to connect with a Transportation staff member who could better discuss the situation.

In response to a further query from Ms. Wong, staff advised that the fencing already located at 8660 No. 3 Road will remain, with only one opening for the drive aisle.

Panel Discussion

The Chair stated that he believed that the application should be referred back to staff and that more could be done to tie the proposed development to the characteristics of the townhouses to the north of the subject site. He stated that he remained unconvinced by Mr. Cheng regarding the rationale for the removal of the two trees located on the property to the north, and that clarification on the current and previous assessment of the two trees was required.

A brief discussion ensued and it was generally agreed that more information from the applicant and from staff was necessary regarding the status of the two trees.

A comment was made that more details should be submitted to the Panel with regard to the viability of tree planting in the narrow strip of landscaping situated between the driveway and the south property line.

Panel Decision

It was moved and seconded

That:

- (a) *the application by Matthew Cheng Architect Inc. (06-333170) be referred back to staff;*
- (b) *the architect address the following three issues:*

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- (i) review the architectural details of this development in order to explore how this development can better integrate with the design of the project to the north;*
 - (ii) bring forward more information on the status of the trees on and adjacent to the site, including the rationale for the removal of trees; and*
 - (iii) submit details with regard to tree planting viability in the narrow strip of landscaping situated between the driveway and the south property line.*
- (c) the application Matthew Cheng Architect Inc. (06-333170) form part of the Development Permit Panel agenda for the Wednesday, January 27, 2009 meeting.*

CARRIED

3. Development Permit 08-432203

(File Ref. No.: 08-432203) (REDMS No. 2757954)

APPLICANT: Polygon Development 225 Ltd.

PROPERTY LOCATION: 9631, 9651, 9691, 9711, 9731, 9751, 9791 Alexandra Road
and 4471, 4511, 4531 and 4551 No. 4 Road

INTENT OF PERMIT:

1. To permit the construction of a 141-unit, three-storey townhouse development in 25 buildings, plus a free-standing amenity building on a site zoned "Townhouses (ZT67)"; and
2. To vary the provisions of the Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:
 - a) reduce the minimum public road setback from 5 m to 4.5 m along the north side of Tomicki Avenue.

Applicant's Comments

Steve Jedreicich, Vice-President for Development, Polygon Development 222 Ltd., provided the following background information regarding 141 three-storey townhouse units, and a one-storey amenity building, in the Alexandra neighbourhood of the West Cambie planning area:

- the proposed development is the fourth Polygon development application in the West Cambie Alexandra neighbourhood
- the proposal includes: (i) raising roads in West Cambie for flood proofing, (ii) widening No. 4 Road, and (iii) future decommissioning of Alexandra Road;
- a future City-owned greenway park will be located to the west;

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- the site will be raised to accommodate the required 2.6 m geodetic flood construction level;
- a significant English Oak tree, 40 feet in height, centered in an amenity space at the south entrance, is to be retained;
- the Oak tree is to be left at its existing grade, with proper drainage to provide proper care;
- since the proposed development was presented to the Advisory Design Panel, the townhouse facades have been redesigned, and two of the most notable achievements have been: (i) larger windows, and (ii) end units appear more like frontages;
- one of many sustainability measures includes energy efficient tank-less hot water heaters for two of the buildings; and
- other key factors included in the design are: (i) LEED Certified equivalent building design, and (ii) recycling management for construction waste.

Architect James Bussey, of Formwerks Architects, pointed out the following features of the proposed development:

- the architectural form and character, authentic arts and crafts form, creates an appropriate entry into the Alexandra neighbourhood;
- by virtue of the curved roadways, and by pairing townhouses on either side of Tomicki, a sense of entry into the neighbourhood is created; Tomicki effectively splits the development into two halves, thereby creating appealing entrances into the development;
- one of the amenity areas is programmed around the retained Oak tree (also known as the 'wishing tree'), creating an appealing identity for that section of the proposed development;
- the one-storey amenity building includes an exercise facility, a kitchen, an office, and a mail room; and
- front door expressions on the street are achieved through the use of structural brackets, wood planter shelves, wood facia and entry porches;

In response to a query from the Chair, Mr. Bussey advised that a change in the materials has eliminated much of the vinyl siding along the streetscapes, and restricted its use to the back of the site. Cedar shingles replace what was once vinyl shingles, red brick is to be used, and projections are of Hardi panel with wood details.

Mr. Jedreicich commented that the density is .75 SFR, which is slightly higher due to the transfer of 11 affordable housing units offsite, as part of Polygon's nearby Cambridge Apartments development.

Staff Comments

Brian Jackson, Director of Development stated that staff supports the Development Permit application and the variance. He advised that the applicant has demonstrated commitment to Richmond and especially to the West Cambie neighbourhood. He commended the applicant's efforts in bringing back townhouse market units, balanced with the requirements of Council, to create a pleasing product. Mr. Jackson noted that recent changes in the design include higher quality materials, than were originally chosen.

Mr. Jackson stated that 92 existing trees will be removed from the site, but that more than 450 new trees will replace them.

The applicant has undertaken additional research and has found ways to incorporate accessibility into the units. Mr. Jackson advised that updated drawings would be submitted before the proposal is forwarded for Council's consideration.

Mr. Jackson noted that the applicant has worked with staff to respond to the following issues raised at a Public Hearing:

- (i) a Polygon contact and telephone number has been posted on-site should issues of (i) speeding trucks in the area during construction cause safety concerns, and/or (ii) construction debris need removal; and
- (ii) Polygon has a plan to ensure the survivability of trees, and City staff will monitor the area to ensure trees are not in distress before returning securities to the developer.

Mr. Jackson stated that staff is supportive of the proposal, as well as the variance to reduce the minimum public road setback along the north side of Tomicki Avenue.

Panel Discussion

Discussion took place between Panel members, the presenters and staff regarding:

- signs notifying the public of access along the communal pedestrian pathway from Tomicki Avenue to Alexandra Road will be posted at both entry points;
- each living space within the individual units feature: (i) a ceiling fan to circulate air, (ii) fresh air intakes and manually adjustable transfer grilles, with louvers that can be open and shut, and (iii) a roof fan to exhaust air out of the units is also a feature;
- a review of ventilation and cooling systems identified that air conditioning or equivalent building technologies are available; the proposal is consistent with the comfortable levels sought in the OCP;
- the applicant is in discussion with the City's public art planner regarding an appropriate location on site for a public art installation; and
- staff, the architect, and the developer have discussed "aging in place" features that are included in all the units, such as lever handles and blocking in walls of all washrooms for future potential grab bar installation.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding the applicant's commitment to provide tank-less hot water heaters for two of the 25-townhouse block buildings, Mr. Jackson advised that Polygon would abide by the agreement outlined in the Rezoning application.

Gallery Comments

Eric Freebold, 3756 West 3rd Avenue, Vancouver, advised that his concerns were twofold: (i) flood control issues, and (ii) the removal of large trees along the periphery of the subject site. Mr. Freebold stated that while he appreciates the process Richmond uses to achieve tree replacement, he noted the benefit trees have on a low-lying island city.

Mr. Jackson addressed Mr. Freebold's concerns and provided details regarding the City's Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw No. 8204. Mr. Jackson explained details of the City's tree bylaw.

Yvonne Bell, 10431 Mortfield Road, Richmond addressed the Panel and stated her concern that the requested variance would bring the facades of the townhouses along Tomicki Road too close to the street. She remarked that a 4.5 metre setback was not aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Jackson advised that the request for the reduced setback does not apply to all townhouses planned to front Tomicki, but that because of the curvature of the street, only those townhouses at the ends of the row would approach a minimum 4.5 setback.

Correspondence

Steve Jedreicich, Vice President Development, Polygon Development (Schedule 1)

Mr. Jackson advised that Polygon has identified an elevator vendor for the eight convertible units, and, as a result, adequate corridor width and other items can be incorporated.

The Chair noted that any changes to the plans as a result of the information contained in the correspondence should be included in the plans that go forward to a future Council meeting.

Panel Discussion

A comment was made that Ms. Bell's remarks regarding setbacks be noted, and that the Panel was cognizant of her comments that the streetscape should not feel crowded.

The Chair remarked that Tomicki Avenue is not an arterial road and that, on average, the setback would be 5 metres. He noted that tree retention is not always achievable but that the applicant had provided a solid design for both open space and landscaping.

The Chair concluded with the remark that he appreciated that the applicant had improved the quality of the materials to be used in the development.

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Panel Decision

It was moved and seconded

1. *permit the construction of a 141-unit, three-storey townhouse development in 25 buildings, plus a free-standing amenity building on a site zoned "Townhouses (ZT67)"; and*
2. *vary the provisions of the Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:*
 - a) *reduce the minimum public road setback from 5 m to 4.5 m along the north side of Tomicki Avenue.*

CARRIED

4. New Business

It was moved and seconded

That the Development Permit Panel meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2010 be cancelled.

CARRIED

5. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

6. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting be adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Development Permit Panel of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Wednesday, January 13, 2010.

Joe Erceg
Chair

Sheila Johnston
Committee Clerk



13 January 2010

City of Richmond
6911 No. 3 Road
Richmond, BC
V6Y 2C1 Canada

Attention: Ms. Sara Badyal

Dear Ms. Badyal,

Re: Wishing Tree – Adaptability Review – 9533/9566 Tomicki Avenue

We confirm that we have reviewed new information from a new vendor that appears to offer an elevator for accessibility that can be installed post-completion by a future homeowner.

Unit Type C1E appear to be able to accommodate the requirements of these units without compromising the layout design (8 units total).

Because we now have a potential elevator source, the following items for future unit adaptability can be incorporated:

- Bracing and framing to allow a future homeowner to remove the joists within the elevator shaft without further structural reinforcement.
- Blocking for future grab bar installation in one bathroom
- Accessible layouts in kitchen and one bathroom
- Increased door width at one bathroom and one bedroom
- Adequate corridor width.

We will forward adaptability drawings upon review with our architect.

Sincerely,
Polygon Wishing Tree Homes Ltd.

Steve V. Jedreicich
VP Development