



Development Permit Panel

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Time: 3:30 p.m.
Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall
Present: Cathryn Volkering Carlile, Chair
Robert Gonzalez, General Manager, Engineering and Public
John Irving, Director of Engineering

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. Minutes

It was moved and seconded

Motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Development Permit Panel held on Wednesday, March 10, 2010.

CARRIED

2. Development Permit 08-429887

(File Ref. No.: 08-429887) (REDMS No. 2847915)

APPLICANT: Orion Estates Ltd.

PROPERTY LOCATION: 7140 Railway Avenue

INTENT OF PERMIT:

1. To permit the construction of 12 town houses at 7140 Railway Avenue on a site zoned "Town Housing (ZT23) – Laurelwood"; and
2. To vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:
 - a) reduce the Minimum Public Road Setback from 6 m to 4.5 m and to 4.0 m at the west corner of the northern building for the open porch and second floor open balcony; and
 - b) permit 45% small car parking spaces (12 small car spaces of 27 total parking spaces).

Applicant's Comments

Patrick Cotter, Patrick Cotter Architect Inc., advised that the site of the proposed 12 town house units at 7140 Railway Avenue, in five separate buildings, is located at the curve of two major avenues, Granville and Railway, and that the site presents design challenges as it is triangular in shape and on the crest of the curve of Railway Avenue.

Mr. Cotter presented an overview of the development and drew the Panel's attention to the following points:

- the architect and staff worked to identify the principles that guide where, on the triangular site, the buildings would be sited;
- all town house units along Railway Avenue have pedestrian-oriented front entries and gated front yards facing the street, and all connect to the public walkway;
- the orientation of the building to the north mirrors the building that is located to the east of the site;
- a series of view corridors was created, an oak tree was retained, and two pockets of open space, one public, one private, were designed to create a more public realm at the north end of the site;
- the design is responsive to the existing context, with an appropriate transition in scale, as the two-storey town houses, along the south edge of the subject site, interface well with the adjacent single-family home;
- entry to the site is located at the only access point of the site, off the existing rear lane;
- the design meets the zoning bylaw requirements for the number of parking spaces, and includes three additional visitor parking spaces;
- variance requested to reduce the minimum public road setback at the west corner of the northern building is in order to move the further building a little west, to create a more generous entry to the public walkway through the site;
- the length of the edge of the property is broken up with a variety of fencing and building components;
- the edge treatment of the hard surface public pathway will be atypical, and articulated, with planted landscaping elements; and
- the pedestrian walkway, with outlets to the north, are perceived to be primarily a public landscape of the open space.

Staff Comments

Brian J. Jackson, Director of Development, advised that during the rezoning application process for the site, the applicant's former architect had plans for ten town house units, but despite the current architect's plans for 12 smaller town house units, the overall density of the site has not changed.

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Mr. Jackson noted that, with respect to the resolution of form and character and the irregular shape of the site, the applicant worked closely with staff, in terms of the amount of landscaping and open space.

The first requested variance refers to the open space, in that it increases the setback to the east property line, thereby increasing the openness of the public pedestrian corridor along the east property line. In addition, breaks in the design give the appearance of a series of small building structures.

The second requested variance is to permit one small car space in each of the 12 side-by-side garages, not tandem parking spaces, and if the variance is granted, the spaces would not be larger than the minimum space set out in the zoning bylaw.

In concluding his remarks Mr. Jackson advised that, given the efforts of the applicant to provide open spaces, staff supports the Development Permit application and the variances.

Panel Discussion

In response to the Panel's queries, staff and Mr. Cotter advised that:

- since the handover from the former architect to the new architect, and with the increase in the number of proposed residential units from ten to 12, visitor parking space requirements increased from two to three spaces, and the design concept includes the required third visitor parking space;
- in addition to the one convertible unit that is designed for potential conversion for universal accessibility, including a future vertical lift, all units include aging in place features, such as handrails, lever handles and blocking in the washroom walls for future grab bar installation; there is an adequate wheelchair turning radius in each kitchen, and all ground floor units are accessible for handicapped visitors; and
- the design provides enough space at the northern unit, on the west side, for a vehicle to execute a turn.

In response to queries regarding landscaping, the landscape architect advised that:

- the garden plots assigned to the units would be administered by the Strata Council, and presumably the Strata Council would split the garden plots in order that each resident could work a half plot;
- the outdoor amenity spaces provided in two areas include no play equipment, due to: (i) more open space at the north end; (ii) the provision of garden plots; and (iii) significant playgrounds located across Railway Avenue at Thompson Community Centre, Burnett High School and Blair Elementary School.
- there is a one metre band of planting adjacent to the fence along the public walkway, and an additional planting on the inside of the 42-inch fence; the community gardens are also fenced;
- two existing Oak trees situated in the Railway Avenue boulevard will be retained, and 29 new trees, not including street trees, will be planted;

- no lights illuminate the public path, but lighting elements illuminate the townhouses and the parking surfaces.

Mr. Cotter added that the recessed front doors provide both visual surveillance and at the same time maintain privacy for the occupants.

Gallery Comments

Corinne Gevaert, 7111 Lynnwood Drive, spoke in support of the development, and in response to her query regarding the use of the name “Laurelwood” in the staff report for DP 08-429887, staff advised that “Laurelwood” is the City’s name for the neighbourhood in which the proposed development is located.

In response to Ms. Gevaert’s concerns regarding maintenance of the existing rear lane that runs from Lindsay Road to Linfield Gate, and traffic flow onto the rear lane between the proposed development and her residence to the east, staff advised that:

- City crews are responsible for maintenance of the existing rear lane; and
- Lynnwood Drive might be extended in the future, but that would depend on whether the City develops its property to the east of the subject site, and there are no plans at present to do so.

Correspondence

Bill and Judith Moffatt, 36-7111 Lynnwood Drive, Richmond (Schedule 1)

Sharon Krowchuk, 7171 Lindsay Road, Richmond (Schedule 2)

Vladimir and Helena Charvat, 7155 Lindsay Road, Richmond (Schedule 3)

In response to the Chair’s query regarding correspondence received in relation to the application, Mr. Jackson provided the following information:

- the letter from Ms. Krowchuk (Schedule 2) included a petition from residents who objected to the small car parking space variance. Other comments addressed: (i) parking capacity, and (ii) general road access to the proposed development;
- the letter from the Charvats (Schedule 3) noted: (i) an objection to the variance; (ii) a concern regarding the height of the proposed town house units making them incompatible with the single-family residences in the same area; (iii) vehicle access to the subject site from the existing rear lane and the narrowness of the lane; and (iv) access for emergency vehicles.

Fred Lin, Senior Transportation Engineer, advised that staff had examined the lane and determined that it can accommodate fire/rescue vehicles. He added that at present the City has no plans to install signage in the Laurelwood area regarding allowed parking, but stated that no parking is allowed in any of the City’s public lanes.

Panel Discussion

In response to a request from the Chair to address the issue of parking in the lane, Mr. Jackson advised that:

- residents can call City Bylaws at 604-204-8631 to complain if neighbours are parking on the street; residents can call the Richmond Detachment of the RCMP at 604-278-1212 if; (i) cars are parking for longer than three hours; and (ii) if a car has been parked on the street for two days, and therefore presumed abandoned.

In response to further queries Mr. Jackson advised that:

- a “resident only” parking programme, such as one administered by the City of Vancouver, complete with signs that earmark specific parking hours for specific spaces, is not being considered by Richmond;
- a City owned parking lot is inconsistent with the Official Community Plan for the City owned lot adjacent to the subject site;
- no parking is allowed on Railway Avenue due to its designation as a major arterial road;
- garbage and recycling collection trucks can be accommodated in the existing rear lane; and
- once the public path has been established, and the lane upgraded, as per the servicing agreement with the applicant, residents will find it easier to travel east.

Mr. Jackson added that the City would request that the applicant submit a construction plan, detailing parking options during the construction period.

Panel Decision

It was moved and seconded

That a Development Permit be issued which would:

1. *permit the construction of 12 town houses at 7140 Railway Avenue on a site zoned “Town Housing (ZT23) – Laurelwood”; and*
2. *vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:*
 - a) *reduce the Minimum Public Road Setback from 6 m to 4.5 m and to 4.0 m at the west corner of the northern building for the open porch and second floor open balcony; and*
 - b) *permit 45% small car parking spaces (12 small car spaces of 27 total parking spaces).*

CARRIED

3. Development Permit DP 09-463392
(File Ref. No.: DP 09-463392) (REDMS No. 2821874))

APPLICANT: Newbury Ventures Limited Partnership

PROPERTY LOCATION: 7751, 7851 Bridge Street and 9531, 9551 Blundell Road

INTENT OF PERMIT:

1. To permit the construction of 22 townhouses at 7751, 7851 Bridge Street and 9531, 9551 Blundell Road on a site zoned "Town Housing (ZT60) – North McLennan (City Centre)"; and
2. To vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:
 - a) reduce the minimum side yard from 3 m to 1.5 m limited to one (1) building on the north side of the outdoor amenity space; and
 - b) to permit 8% small car parking spaces (4 small car spaces of 49 total parking spaces).

Applicant's Comments

Taizo Yamamoto, Yamamoto Architecture Inc., Vancouver advised that the proposed development comprises 22 townhouse units in seven separate buildings, on Bridge Street and Blundell Road in the North McLennan (City Centre) neighbourhood. The nature of the site dictates a row of three buildings fronting Blundell Road to the south, and four single buildings to the north..

Mr. Yamamoto provided the following design details:

- to better reflect and mirror the single family homes fronting Bridge Street, the three-story townhouse units are stepped down;
- a new public lane, east and west, curves slightly and provides visual interest as well as traffic calming between the buildings;
- townhouse unit entries are oriented east/west, and away from the public lane;
- unit entries on the south side buildings are located on the other side from the garage, facing a central walkway, thereby allowing a more pedestrian scale experience, and bringing the entries out to the streetscape;
- the amenity space at a central location provides a slide and climbing equipment and it creates a termination of the access from Blundell;
- two two-storey units on the north are adjacent to a visitor accessible parking stall;
- all units include aging in place features, such as handrails, lever handles, blocking in washroom walls for future grab bar installation, and a turning radius in the two convertible units;
- sustainability features include continuous rigid insulation beneath the entire slab ground floor habitable space, and enhanced permeability of soft landscaping and pavers;

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- individual units are clad in HardiePlank fibre cement horizontal siding, with vinyl horizontal siding, board and batten, and painted wood trim; and
- garbage and recycling are consolidated at a single location adjacent to the vehicle entry to the site.

Masa Ito, Landscape Architect, advised that:

- the central pedestrian mews provides a green space corridor through the site;
- the landscape design endeavours to eliminate any confusion between the drive aisle and the central pedestrian mews;
- the landscaped centrally located open amenity space connects to the pedestrian mews, and includes shrubs and trees; and
- all road edges feature soft landscaping.

Staff Comments

Mr. Jackson advised that staff supports the Development Permit application and the variances. He stated that the design responds well to the site, and the two-storey buildings to the north and the three-storey buildings to the south correspond well with adjacent structures.

The curve in the public lane reduces a 'bowling alley effect' and provides visual interest to the project.

With regard to the requested variances, Mr. Jackson remarked that reduction of the minimum side yard is limited to the passive side yard condition of a lower, two-storey building. The small car parking space variance is: (i) limited to one small car parking space for each of the four townhouses; (ii) are not tandem; and (iii) are side-by-side.

Panel Discussion

In response to queries Mr. Yamamoto and Mr. Jackson advised that:

- on-site space, including at north end of the property where the visitor parking spots are located, is generous enough for turning manoeuvres;
- the pedestrian pathway between Buildings 5 and 6, fronting Blundell Road, is for use by townhouse residents only;
- the north/south laneway, west of Building 5, does not connect but does not present any restriction for a future development;
- in addition to evergreens, shrubs and trellis work used as screening between the subject site and residents to the north and northwest, the site is being build up;
- a fence would be added along the western edge of the subject site;
- the site will feature 79 new trees and no retained trees; and

- bedrooms in Building B have been oriented east and west, to alleviate any overlook to the north.

Gallery Comments

None.

Correspondence

None.

Panel Decision

It was moved and seconded

That a Development Permit be issued which would:

1. *permit the construction of 22 townhouses at 7751, 7851 Bridge Street and 9531, 9551 Blundell Road on a site zoned "Town Housing (ZT60) – North McLennan (City Centre)"; and*
2. *vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:*
 - a) *reduce the minimum side yard from 3 m to 1.5 m limited to one (1) building on the north side of the outdoor amenity space; and*
 - b) *permit 8% small car parking spaces (4 small car spaces of 49 total parking spaces).*

CARRIED

4. Development Permit DP 09-504501

(File Ref. No.: DP 09-504501) (REDMS No. 2842799)

APPLICANT: Yamamoto Architecture Inc.

PROPERTY LOCATION: 8051, 8091, 8111 Williams Road

INTENT OF PERMIT:

1. To permit the construction of 16 two and three-storey townhouses at 8051/8091/8111 Williams Road on a site zoned Medium Density Townhouses (RTM3); and
2. To vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:
 - a) increase the maximum lot coverage from 40% to a maximum of 41.3% on the net site (i.e. after dedications);
 - b) reduce the front yard setback from a minimum of 6.0m to a minimum of 5.4m along Williams Road; and
 - c) permit tandem stalls in up to three units (i.e. 6 tandem parking stalls).

Applicant's Comments

Taizo Yamamoto, Yamamoto Architecture Inc., Vancouver advised that the project consists of seven two-storey townhouse units at the rear of the site on Williams Road just east of No. 3 Road, and nine two-storey and three-storey units along the site's frontage. He gave a brief overview of the proposed development, and drew the Panel's attention to the following details:

- the two-storey units front the internal drive aisle, while the two-storey and three-storey units face Williams Road;
- the structures are articulated with varying rooflines to: (i) respond to the neighbourhood; and (ii) effectively break up larger facades;
- an outdoor amenity area is located along the western property line, and has been designed as a more adult space with seating areas and a landscaped area; it provides some garden space;
- garbage is intended to be collected at individual doors, but provision has been made for a future facility near the "T" intersection in the interior of the site; and
- the buildings have been oriented to maximize street front character, with such features as individual entries, oversize gables and articulated individual units with various gable forms, different siding treatments such as vinyl applied to second and third stories, and hardi plank siding with board and batten and wood.

Mr. Yamamoto offered the following information regarding concerns the applicant had heard from a neighbour to the east (Ms. Liu) and a neighbour to the west (Michael Chung):

- the applicant has emailed Ms. Liu proposing a six-foot fence along the entire property line as a buffer between the subject site and her home, to mitigate privacy concerns. In addition, as per the neighbour's preference, hedgerow cedars along part of the east property line are planned.
- regarding Mr. Chung's concerns that damage has occurred to his property, it is noted that the proposed house closest to Mr. Chung's home is seven metres, nearly 30 feet distance. The applicant believes no damage should occur to Mr. Chung's home.

Pat Campbell, Landscape Architect, noted that:

- the existing landscape is in association with existing residences;
- trees in the northwest corner on the adjacent lot will be protected;
- a landmark, 25-foot high Grand Fir tree, located in the front yard, will be retained; some trees on site will be removed and 13 replacement trees are included in the landscaping plan;
- sustainability is enhanced by the introduction of permeable pavers in the parking area and the internal drive aisle; and
- residents are provided with contained yard areas that can be used as family space.

Staff Comments

Mr. Jackson advised that staff supports the requested variances and are in favour of the Development Permit application, and he commended the applicant for saving the Grand Fir tree on site. He commented that two of the variance requests result from the amount of dedication needed along Williams Road, and that staff supports the small increase.

With regard to the request to permit six tandem parking stalls, Mr. Jackson noted that staff supports the request, and a restrictive covenant will be registered to prevent the conversion of the tandem parking spaces, as a condition of final Development Permit approval.

Panel Discussion

Discussion ensued and the following advice was given:

- the survivability of conifer trees at the northwest corner of the subject site is enhanced by the request of a three metre wide right-of-way along the northern yard and the pruning of a row of 22 trees overhanging into the subject lot from an adjacent property;
- in addition to the Grand Fir tree, one small tree has been retained at the southeast corner of the site, and all other vegetation on the site would be new plantings;
- in terms of accessibility, one unit is convertible, and adaptability features, such as lever handles and grab bars, are included in all other units; and
- for on-site garden areas, water hose elements can be incorporated into the building permit.

Chair requested that Mr. Yamamoto comment further on the written concerns (Schedule 5) by Michael Chung, 8031 Williams Road, regarding (i) proposed maximum lot coverage; (ii) sufficient privacy to the master bedroom at 8031 Williams Road; and (iii) the likelihood of damage to his home and property during the construction of the proposed townhouse units. Mr. Yamamoto advised that:

- Proposed maximum lot coverage and the proposed reduction in setback; even with the applicant's desire to have more two-storey units, the proposed development complies with the permitted density, should the variance be granted;
- Sufficient privacy for Mr. Chung's master bedroom; the design provides more than the required setback and the architect has oriented the facades away from the neighbour's master bedroom so that the overlook onto the property to the west is minimized;
- Damage suffered when development west of the home was undertaken, the house is seven metres from the property line; this application provides a seven metre setback from Mr. Chung's property, while the earlier development on the opposite side provided three metres between the construction site and Mr. Chung's property.

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In response to a further query, regarding the proposed buffer between the proposed development and the single family residential home to the west, the applicant advised that vegetation, a walkway and a fence are planned, but that no hedge is planned.

Correspondence

Joyce Liu, 8131 Williams Road, Richmond (Schedule 4)

Wayne Ryan, Ryan Law Group, 5900 No. 3 Road, Richmond (Schedule 5), written on behalf of his client Michael Chung, 8031 Williams Road

In response to the Chair's query regarding correspondence received from Joyce Liu, 8131 Williams Road, in relation to the application, Mr. Jackson provided the following information:

- in two emails from Joyce Liu she stated her concern regarding hedging along the east side property line; the applicant responded directly to Ms. Liu and advised that new edging was incorporated into the site plans; staff looked at the possibility of planting a temporary hedge across the future access to the property to the east, should that ever be redeveloped, but did not want to provide a hedge at that location because it is difficult to connect developments when temporary hedges have to be taken out.

In response to the Chair's query regarding correspondence received from Michael Chung's lawyer Wayne Ryan, in relation to the application, Mr. Jackson stated that Mr. Chung's concerns were three fold. Mr. Jackson provided the following information:

- Massing: the planned increase in mass and lot coverage is very little, and staff is in support of the lot coverage because: (i) the applicant had to make a dedication of land on Williams Road; (ii) because units on the west side of the proposed development are two-story and are set back considerably more than the minimum for the amenity space offered on the west side of the property; (iii) the open space sought on at the northern buildings; and (iv) staff believes the application responds to the issue of sufficient privacy;
- Demolition issue: the applicant has a copy of the City's good neighbours brochure, and is aware of the hours during which demolition is allowed; the applicant is aware of the potential for possible damage to adjacent houses; the app has indicated setbacks are more than the minimum for townhouses; and vibration can be accommodated by demolition techniques employed by the applicant; and

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- Conditions requested: (i) the City does not ask for an independent engineering firm paid for by the developer, to verify compliance with the compaction of the properties proposed for development; the City has not asked anyone to do this in the past, nor is this something the City could, or has ever put in place; (ii) the City considers that all demolition activities are sensitive to potential damage to neighbouring lots and the demolition process approved by the City requires that all demolition be done in accordance with City bylaws, procedures, and policies and (iii) the City has not requested a bond for potential damage of any developer in the past, and if the developer acts in accordance with the City's demolition process, there is no need to fulfill this request.

In response to a suggestion by the Chair, Mr. Jackson advised that the City could respond to Mr. Ryan's letter in writing, though it is not the City's practice to do so.

Gallery Comments

Matthew Chung, owner of 8031 Williams Road, a property adjacent to the subject property, referenced the letter sent on his behalf by his lawyer, Wayne Ryan (Schedule 5) and stated that for the past two years he has endured construction of a new development behind his home, and that he has experienced nothing but trouble due to the construction.

He stated that when he moved into his home, an inspector had indicated there were no problems with the home. Since that time his home has suffered \$80,000 in damages, and he has been unable to recover no recompense for the damage. He added that neither his insurance company nor any other party has listened sufficiently to his concerns.

Mr. Jackson advised that the City's stated hours of construction operation, as well as the City's noise bylaw is fair, but that the hours of construction are generous.

The Chair invited the applicant to describe how, as good neighbours, he can undertake the demolition.

Mr. Yamamoto advised that the applicant was present, and that at the conclusion of the Development Permit Panel (DPP) meeting he and the applicant could meet and speak with Mr. Chung.

After the Chair had received assurance from Mr. Yamamoto that Mr. Chung's concerns would be met with sensitivity, she encouraged the architect and the applicant to meet with Mr. Chung after the DPP meeting had adjourned.

The Chair remarked that the concerns raised by Mr. Chung had been noted. She added that the proposed planting of trees on the subject site could act as a response to some of his concerns.

Panel Decision

That a Development Permit be issued which would:

1. *permit the construction of 16 two and three-storey townhouses at 8051/8091/8111 Williams Road on a site zoned Medium Density Townhouses (RTM3); and*

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2. *vary the provisions of Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to:*
- a) *increase the maximum lot coverage from 40% to a maximum of 41.3% on the net site (i.e. after dedications);*
 - b) *reduce the front yard setback from a minimum of 6.0m to a minimum of 5.4m along Williams Road; and*
 - c) *permit tandem stalls in up to three units (i.e. 6 tandem parking stalls).*

CARRIED

5. New Business

None.

6. Date Of Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 14, 2010

7. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting be adjourned at 4:45 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, March 24, 2010.

Cathryn Volkering Carlile
Chair

Sheila Johnston
Committee Clerk