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Sent: July 28, 2020 8:55 PM
To: CityClerk
Subject: DP 18-837117

To Development Permit Panel
Date: <u>JULY 29, 2020</u>
Item # <u>4</u>
Re: <u>DP 18-837117</u>



Development Permit Panel

To whom it may concern.

I am hereby submitting my comments regarding the above referenced application, hoping these may be taken into account and contribute to better serve the city of Richmond. Not being an expert, I am expressing this opinion as a citizen that routinely enjoys the park, and a neighbour from the building to the South, on 6611 Minoru Boulevard.

At first impression this part two of the Park Residences offers a closure to the project already executed and contributes to the harmony of the neighbourhood. In particular, it projects a very welcome green area between part one and the projected plan, that seems to promise continuity between both phases (the existing and the projected) and between the city and the park.

On a more detailed analysis, however, the proposed plan does raise concerns on a number of points, as I will try to cover below.

1. This phase two doesn't seem to be site sensitive.

I mean by this that instead of adopting an inclusive and dialoguing relation with the pre-existing built environment, the park included, it tends to operate in what could be qualified as a predatory mode. In the proposed development, phase one and two would be very well integrated, but this would be so at expenses of the neighbouring areas, park included. Examples of this are:

a) the proposed 15 store high tower at the north, literally bordering the park;

b) the advancement (in relationship to what is built there now) of about 12 metres towards the park, leaving a distance of 3,5 metres between the park and the proposed construction of a row of townhouses, similar to the existing in the already built phase of the complex.

c) the reduction of the space between the existing first building of the complex designed by Arthur Erickson and Gilbert Massey, from the seventies, 6611 Minoru, and a proposed wall of concrete 3 storey plus high that runs from Mah Bing road to 5 metres from the park.

2. For a number of reasons it would seem preferable to project the greenway at the South limit of the project adding a buffer between the Ericson–Massey complex and this project. The proposed

greenway that connects the park with Murdoch Road – which, again, might not be such a good idea -- seems to act as a strategy to approach towards the park (and it should be added, towards an area of the park with a couple of centennial trees) the two buildings and the townhouses row to the south of the projected greenway. From the blue prints it is noticeable that these are much more closer to the park than the townhouse rows on the former phase of this development.

a) the consequence of this is that the buffer of space and, in the case of 6611 Minoru, of tree lining between the park and construction, vanishes. It could be noted, for the sake of the argument, that the Erickson - Massey building, besides this gardened buffer, distances 18 metres from the park, and not, as is being proposed here, 3,25 metres. The developers suggest that this is an urban strategy as it puts 'eyes on the street'. But the point is that the park is not the street, and while experiencing the park in the walkway of phase one, what the park goer is saluted with is not an 'urban environment' but the clutter of stuff that the residents of townhouses accumulate in their entryways, transforming what used to be a pleasant fruition experience into a memory of trajectories that should now be avoided.

b) in sum, it seems highly doubtful that this semi privatisation of a public park may serve public interest.

c) finally, since the Erickson – Massey project establishes the 18 metres distance from the park, why not work with that reference and demand solutions that work towards both the protection of the park (establishing a buffer distance) and the value of the already existing built city?

3. The projected wall to the south of the proposal seems to advance about 1,50m towards the south limit in relation to the existing construction, that is, reducing the already limited space between buildings, with the added drawback of creating a barrier in concrete throughout the whole limit of the building (very similar to the effect created by the existing south limit of phase one). Besides unpredicted wind and weather related effects caused by another East-West barrier (of 3 storeys plus height) at a mere 5,2 meters from the existing building, it is unclear which, if any, measures were considered to diminish possible weather related effects as well as the predictably disturbing acoustic effects.

These are 3 issues 1- excessive proximity to the park of one high rise, 2 - excessive proximity to the park of a row of townhouses and 3 -construction of a 3 storeys plus continuous wall from Mah Bing road to 5,1 meters from the park that should be given further consideration, given the foreseeable drawbacks that they will bring to the area, the park and the city.

Last but not least, the proposal presents a number of innuendos that should either be proved or removed, at the risk of – if the proposal is moved forward as it is – establishing as truthful something that possibly is not.

With regards,

Nuno Porto