



To: Richmond City Council

Date: June 21, 2024

From: John Irving
Acting Chair, Development Permit Panel

File: DP 21-932383

Re: **Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on May 10, 2023**

Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of Development Permit (DP 21-932383) for the properties at 8951, 8971 Spires Road and 8991 Spires Gate, be endorsed and the Permit so issued.

John Irving
Acting Chair, Development Permit Panel
(604-276-4140)

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on May 10, 2023.

DP 21-932383 – FLAT ARCHITECTURE INC. – 8951, 8971 SPIRES ROAD AND 8991 SPIRES GATE
(May 10, 2023)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to permit the construction of 22 townhouse units and two secondary suites at 8951, 8971 Spires Road and 8991 Spires Gate and the surplus portion of Spires Road on a site zoned “Parking Structure Townhouses (RTP4)” zone. Variances are included in the proposal to reduce the minimum lot width from 40 m to 33.5 m and to reduce the minimum lot area from 2,400 m² to 2,000 m².

The applicant and architect, Rajinder Warraich, of Flat Architecture Inc., and the landscape architect, Ruchir Dhall, of Architecture Panel Inc., provided a brief visual presentation highlighting:

- 22 residential units and two secondary suites are proposed in three townhouse blocks.
- The proposal includes two Basic Universal Housing Units (BUH) units.
- A future lane will be provided along the west property line of the subject site and a pedestrian walkway is proposed along the site’s south property line.
- The Tudor-style architecture of the townhouse buildings is consistent with the recently completed townhouse development to the south.
- The entrance to the parking podium and the main pedestrian entrance to the building are located along Spires Road.
- The central courtyard on the podium level is surrounded by the three townhouse blocks.
- Stairs are proposed on Spires Gate and Spires Road frontages to provide pedestrian access to the podium.
- Two common outdoor amenity areas are provided on the podium level.
- Private outdoor spaces will be provided for townhouse units at grade and on the podium level.
- Lighting will be provided along the future lane along the west property line and along the pedestrian walkway to the south of the subject site.
- Landscape design for ground-oriented units in the proposed development matches the landscaping of the recently completed neighbouring townhouse development.
- Landscaping in the form of shrubs and low hedges provides visual separation between semi-private and common outdoor amenity spaces.
- A row of hedge provides separation between the picnic area and community gardens on the podium level outdoor amenity area.
- Flowering plants and ornamental shrubs will be installed at the site’s pedestrian entrance near the intersection of Spires Gate and Spires Road.

Staff noted that (i) there are two technical variances proposed for the project relating to the site area and site geometry which were noted at the time of rezoning, (ii) there is a Servicing Agreement associated with the project which include, among others, frontage improvements and utility works along Spires Gate and Spires Road, (iii) two Basic Universal Housing (BUH) units are included in the project, and (iv) the project has been designed to achieve Step Code Level 3 of the BC Energy Step Code.

In reply to a query from the Panel regarding potential security concerns on the future lane along the west property line, Mr. Warraich noted that (i) there are no grade changes from the future lane to the subject site and adjacent developments, and (ii) proposed measures to address potential security and safety concerns include locating the children's play area overlooking the future lane, installing larger windows on the side of residential units adjacent to the future lane, installing lighting along the lane, and temporarily treating the future lane as a private space including installing a fence and gate until the lane will be fully developed in the future.

In reply to a query from the Panel regarding access from the parkade to the residential units, Mr. Warraich noted that (i) there is no direct access from the parkade to the residential units except for the two secondary suites, and (ii) an exit stair is provided in the parkade to provide access to residential units on the podium level.

In reply to a query from the Panel regarding how the project would achieve Step Code Level 3 of the BC Energy Step Code, Mr. Warraich stated that the project will be using a high efficiency condenser system in addition to other proposed sustainability measures.

Mr. Warraich confirmed that some of the residential parking spaces will be in tandem arrangement. In reply to a further query from the Panel, Mr. Craig confirmed that there is a restrictive covenant to prohibit the conversion of the tandem garage area into habitable or storage space and to ensure that both parking spaces are assigned to the same dwelling unit.

Jose Gonzalez, 8935 Cook Crescent, submitted correspondence expressing concerns regarding construction impacts to the neighbourhood including pedestrian safety, vehicle safety, overall access to the neighbourhood, and continuity of frontage treatments, landscaping and sidewalks.

In reply to Ms. Gonzalez's concerns, Staff noted that (i) should the project proceed, it would be required to provide a Construction Parking and Management Plan as a condition of Building Permit issuance, (ii) the plan will be reviewed and approved by the Transportation Department, (iii) the City is aware of construction related concerns in the area and is carefully monitoring the situation, (iv) residents could contact the City's Bylaw Department should they have any construction related concern in the area, (v) overall access to the neighbourhood would be addressed by the Construction Parking and Management Plan, (vi) the proposed development will be providing sidewalks along their frontages, (vii) the sidewalk along the Spires Road frontage of the proposed development will be connected to the recently installed sidewalk along the adjacent townhouse development to the south.

The Panel expressed support for the project, noting that its design has addressed potential security and safety concerns.

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