



# City of Richmond

## Report to Council

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**To:** Richmond City Council  
**From:** John Irving  
Chair, Development Permit Panel  
**Date:** June 29, 2021  
**File:** DP 19-875398  
**Re:** Development Permit Panel Meeting Held on October 28, 2020

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### Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of a Development Permit (DP 19-875398) for the property at 8671, 8691, 8711 and 8731 Spires Road be endorsed, and the Permit so issued.

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

WC/SB:blg

### Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meeting held on October 28, 2020.

DP 19-875398 – SPIRES ROAD DEVELOPMENT HOLDINGS LTD. – 8671, 8691, 8711 AND 8731 SPIRES ROAD  
(October 28, 2020)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to permit the construction of 22 townhouse units and two secondary suites on a site zoned “Parking Structure Townhouses (RTP4)”, including a surplus portion of the Spires Road and Cook Crescent road allowance.

Architect, Kai Hotson, of Hotson Architecture Inc., and Landscape Architect, Alyssa Semczyszyn, of Prospect and Reference Landscape Architects, provided a brief presentation, including:

- Three townhouse building blocks enclose a parking structure at grade.
- Each residential unit is assigned its own parking stall.
- There is an outdoor courtyard on the podium overtop the parkade which connects the three building blocks.
- A mix of three to four-bedroom units are proposed, with majority of units having three bedrooms.
- Each unit has its own private outdoor space at grade and/or on the podium.
- The podium level can be accessed either through an elevator or stairs.
- Common outdoor amenity spaces are provided at grade and on the podium.
- Public pedestrian walkways are proposed along the north and west property lines to provide pedestrian access through the site and neighbourhood in general.
- Seating nodes are provided along the public pedestrian walkways.
- The architecture for the townhouse development is compatible with the predominantly single-family neighbourhood.
- Proposed exterior building materials include, among others, brick and plank siding.
- Loosely alternating the use of light and dark coloured materials visually breaks down the building blocks and breaks up the repetitiveness of units.
- Two trees at the northeast corner will be retained and protected and six trees on neighbouring properties will also be protected.
- The project’s landscape design is intended to create enjoyable private outdoor spaces for individual units and engaging pedestrian walkways to encourage people to walk through the neighbourhood.
- On the podium level, low fences and raised planters provide separation and privacy between units and encourage social interaction among residents. More substantial screening separates the common outdoor amenity area from adjacent private patios on the podium level.
- The common outdoor amenity area on the northeast corner of the site includes translucent fencing to screen the amenity area and also create a sense of openness and two trees will be retained and integrated into the children’s play area.

Staff noted that: (i) the project will provide two Basic Universal Housing (BUH) units and two secondary suites; (ii) the project has been designed to achieve Step Code Level 3 of the BC Energy Step Code; (iii) there is a significant Servicing Agreement associated with the project which includes site servicing and frontage works along Spires Road and Cook Crescent; and (iv) staff appreciate the efforts of the project's design team for the retention and protection of two trees along the Cook Crescent frontage.

In reply to Panel queries, Kai Hotson and Alyssa Semczyszyn advised that: (i) the ground floor of the three-storey townhouse units facing Spires Road includes a small room with a closet, a washroom, a mechanical space under the stairwell, and a door that provides access to the parkade; (ii) the at grade unit entries and living spaces of the three-storey units and the single level BUH unit facing Spires Road provide animation to the street; (iii) potential overlook to adjacent single-family homes would be mitigated by the retained trees along the north and west sides of the site, the public walkways along the north and west property lines, and the significant distance of the north property line of the subject site from the rear yards of single-family homes to the north; (iv) the proposed mechanical systems will not impact the form and character of the project as the Heat Recovery Ventilation (HRV) units are located inside each residential unit and the heat pump is located in the parkade; (v) materials for the building envelope include, among others, triple glazed windows and insulated roofs and walls; (vi) the project provides 1.2 parking stalls for each unit and five visitor parking stalls; (vii) the tree species to be planted in podium level courtyard raised planters would be suitable for the size of planters being proposed; (viii) irrigation will be provided for the trees, and (ix) different patterns of pavers are proposed for the private patios and shared pathway on the podium level.

In reply to Panel queries, staff confirmed that: (i) a Statutory Right-of-Way (SRW) for public pedestrian access along the north and west property lines of the subject site has been secured; (ii) the public walkways along the north and west property lines would be expanded when adjacent properties redevelop in the future as SRWs for public pedestrian access would also be secured on these properties; (iii) the interim fence along the north and west property lines of the subject site would be removed when adjacent properties redevelop; (iv) the project meets the Zoning Bylaw's requirement of 1.2 parking stalls for each unit for residential developments in this area of the City Centre Area; (v) the project assigns a minimum of one parking stall for each unit; (vi) there are additional unassigned parking stalls that would be assigned as part of the unit sales contract; and (vii) a combination of three tree species are proposed to be planted on the podium level courtyard, which include Hybrid Magnolia, Manchurian Snakebark Maple, and Fullmoon Maple.

Correspondence was submitted to the meeting regarding the application.

Jose Gonzalez, of Cook Crescent, expressed concerns regarding parking, circulation and traffic during construction. In response, staff noted that: (i) these concerns are largely related to ongoing City utility works in the area which are expected to be completed in January, 2021; (ii) a construction traffic management plan will be required for the project prior to Building Permit issuance to deal with trades parking and deliveries to the site; (iii) the developer will be required to enter into a Servicing Agreement with the City for new road works and any damages will have to be repaired by the developer; (iv) with respect to the concern on parking and traffic generated by the project in the neighbourhood, a Transportation Impact Study for the project was reviewed and supported by the City's Transportation Division; (v) the existing road network is sufficient to accommodate the traffic that would be generated in the area; (vi) there will be road improvements along the site frontage; (vii) a traffic and parking management plan will be required during construction; (viii) the Community Bylaws Department has been asked to conduct more parking enforcement patrols in the area; (ix) there are significant liability issues related to providing a public access to private outdoor amenity area; (x) low retaining walls are proposed along the edges of the proposed development; and (xi) the project complies with the City's Traffic Bylaw sight line requirements for the southeast corner of the subject site.

In reply to Panel queries, staff advised that: (i) the future public park will be implemented over the long term as redevelopment occurs; and (ii) in the interim, the active open spaces on William Cook Elementary School to the south, the Garden City Community Park, and the Garden City Lands would provide for the outdoor amenity space needs of residents in the area.

In reply to Panel queries, Kai Hotson acknowledged that: (i) low retaining walls are proposed as the site grade along the north and west property lines will be raised by approximately one foot to match the existing grade of adjacent streets; (ii) there is planting on top of the retaining walls which are generally used to create a patio for each unit; (iii) an elaborate design is proposed for retaining walls along the site edges where existing trees are being retained; (iv) the retaining walls are set back from the development's property lines to protect the retained trees and are hidden behind the temporary fence along the west and north property lines; (v) a very low timber retaining wall is proposed for the outer edge of the public walkway along the north edge of the site; (vi) a low concrete retaining wall is proposed along the site edges to create private patios; and (vii) the applicant is also considering a block system for the concrete retaining wall along the site edges.

As a result of the discussion on the design of the retaining walls, staff were directed to work with the applicant to improve the retaining wall treatment along the site edges.

The Panel expressed support for the project, particularly the architectural treatment for the townhouse building blocks, the provision of public walkways, the use of low-carbon technology to achieve Energy Step Code requirements, and the siting of the parkade in the middle of the townhouse building blocks. In addition, the Panel noted that the project is a good addition to the neighbourhood.

June 29, 2021

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Subsequent to the meeting, the applicant provided additional details clarifying the locations of the retaining walls and confirming the retaining walls will be constructed with high quality durable concrete block system for aesthetics and maintenance purposes.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.