



To: Richmond City Council
From: Joe Erceg, MCIP
Chair, Development Permit Panel
Date: April 21, 2010
File: 0100-20-DPER1
Re: **Development Permit Panel Meetings Held on March 24, 2010,
March 10, 2010 and January 27, 2010**

Panel Recommendation

That the recommendations of the Panel to authorize the issuance of:

- i) a Development Permit (DP 08-429887) for the property at 7140 Railway Avenue;
- ii) a Development Variance Permit (DV 09-505657) for the property at 8751 Finn Road;
- iii) a Development Permit (DP 08-441302) for the property at 4360 Moncton Street; and

be endorsed, and the Permits so issued.

Joe Erceg, MCIP
Chair, Development Permit Panel

SB:blg

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following items at its meetings held on March 24, 2010, March 10, 2010 and January 27, 2010.

DP 08-429887 – ORION ESTATES LTD. – 7140 RAILWAY AVENUE
(March 24, 2010)

The Panel considered an application to permit the construction of 12 townhouses on a site zoned “Town Housing (ZT23) – Laurelwood”. There are variances included in the proposal for reduced public road setbacks and small car parking spaces.

The Architect, Patrick Cotter, of Patrick Cotter Architect Inc., provided a brief presentation of the project, which includes:

- challenging triangular site located at the curve of two (2) major avenues: Granville and Railway;
- pedestrian-oriented front entries and gated front yards facing the street;
- orientation of the north building 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 (2) pockets of open space, one (1) public, one (1) private, were designed to create a more public realm at the north end of the site;
- the design is responsive to its context, with an appropriate transition in scale between the multi-family development to the east and single-family homes to the south;
- entry to the site is located off the existing rear lane;
- the required number of parking spaces is provided, including three (3) visitor parking spaces;
- a variance is requested to reduce the minimum public road setback at the west corner of the northern building in order to move the building a little west, to create a more generous entry to the public walkway through the site;
- a variety of fencing and building components break up the length of the property edge;
- having an adjacent public pathway is unique, and is complemented with planted landscaping elements on-site, including an open landscaped area to the north at the path opening; and
- the recessed front doors provide both visual surveillance and maintain privacy for the occupants.

Staff supported the Development Permit application and the variances. Staff advised that:

- During the rezoning application process for the site, the applicant’s former architect had plans for 10 townhouse units, but despite the current architect’s plans for 12 smaller townhouse units, the overall density of the site has not changed;
- The applicant had worked closely with staff regarding the resolution of form and character, the irregular shape of the site, and the generous amount of landscaping and open space;

- The road setback variance allows an increased 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; and
- The small car variance is to permit one (1) 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 be larger than the minimum space set out in the zoning bylaw.

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

- With the increased number of units, visitor parking spaces were increased to three (3) spaces; and
- In addition to the one (1) convertible unit that is designed for potential conversion for accessibility with 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.

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

- There was a half garden plot provided for each unit, assigned and administered by the future Strata Council;
- The outdoor amenity spaces provided in two (2) areas includes no play equipment due to: (i) more open space at the north end; (ii) the provision of garden plots; and (iii) significant open areas and playgrounds located across Railway Avenue at Thompson Community Centre, Burnett High School and Blair Elementary School;
- There is a 1 m 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 (2) existing Oak trees situated in the Railway Avenue boulevard will be retained, and 29 new trees, not including street trees, will be planted; and
- The public path was not lit, but the townhouses and parking areas including lighting elements.

Ms. Corinne Gevaert spoke in support of the development, and in response to her query regarding the use of the name "Laurelwood", staff advised that this 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;
- Lynnwood Drive might be extended in the future; and
- The City has no plans at present to develop its property to the east of the subject site.

Public correspondence was received regarding the application, including concerns regarding:

- The small car parking space variance;
- Parking capacity;

- The height of the proposed town house units as incompatible with the single-family residences;
- Vehicle access to the subject site from the existing rear lane; and
- Narrowness of the lane and access for emergency vehicles.

Transportation staff advised that the lane had been examined and it was determined that it could accommodate fire/rescue vehicles. Staff added that at present, the City has no plans to install signage in the Laurelwood area regarding allowed parking, but that no parking is allowed in any of the City's public lanes.

In response to queries from the Panel, staff 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 cars are parking for longer than three (3) hours, or if a car has been parked on the street for two (2) days and therefore presumed abandoned.
- 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 at this time by Richmond;
- A City-owned parking lot is inconsistent with the Official Community Plan (OCP) 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;
- Once the public path has been established, and the lane upgraded, as per the required servicing agreement associated with the application, residents will find it easier to travel east; and
- The applicant will be required to submit a construction plan, detailing parking options during the construction period as part of the Building Permit process.

The Panel recommends that the Permit be issued.

DV 09-505657 – ARVINDER RANDHAWA – 8751 FINN ROAD
(March 10, 2010)

The Panel considered an application to vary the provisions of the Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500 to increase the maximum required setback from a public road in the Agriculture (AG1) zone from 50 m to 75 m to accommodate a two-storey addition to the existing single-family dwelling at 8751 Finn Road.

The applicant, Mr. Arvinder Randhawa, addressed the Panel and apologized for starting to build an addition on the north side of his home. He stated that he was unaware of the need for a Permit for the project. After the Building Approval Department staff issued a Stop Work Order, Mr. Randhawa applied for the Permit.

Mr. Randhawa noted that his family had purchased the property, planted blueberries, and operate an active farm, and that the rationale for the extension to the family residence that is located on a site within the Agricultural Land Reserve, is the need for separate bedrooms for the family children who are college-age and require privacy as they become young adults and as they pursue their studies.

Staff stated that the City is reluctant to issue a Permit when an application is made after construction activities have begun. In the case of Mr. Randhawa's application, the applicant proposes to undertake a legal commitment to limit all future buildings to the south-eastern portion of the site, where the existing single-family dwelling, farm building, and septic field are located. By ensuring that the proposed extension, as well as any future buildings, are concentrated in one area, more land is made available for farming, which constitutes an agricultural benefit. With this benefit in mind, staff supports the variance.

In response to a query from the Panel, staff advised that the applicant's commitment to limit future buildings to the southeastern portion of the site would be secured by a restrictive covenant.

No correspondence was received regarding the application.

The Chair sought clarification from the applicant regarding the type of agricultural activities undertaken on the subject site. Mr. Randhawa advised that his family farms blueberries on the land, and has done so since taking ownership of the farm.

The Panel recommends that the Permit be issued.

DP 08-441302 – MATTHEW CHENG ARCHITECT INC. – 4360 MONCTON STREET
(January 27, 2010)

The Panel considered an application to permit the construction of 14 townhouses on a site zoned "Town Housing (ZT41) - Bayview Street/English Avenue (Steveston)". Variances are included in the proposal for reduced side yard setbacks, increased building height for gable roof dormers and tandem parking.

The Architect, Mr. Matthew Cheng, and Landscape Architect, Mr. Fred Liu, provided brief descriptions of the project, including:

- The architectural character is complimentary to the townhouse development to the east, with a combination of façade treatments, dormer treatments, gables, and projecting bays.
- The low pitch skirt roof is incorporated to lessen the building massing.
- The proposed height was three-storey, lowered from four-storey.
- The siting, orientation, and massing of the buildings respect the existing townhouse developments and single-family homes.
- Tandem parking is proposed in the units fronting onto Moncton Street.
- Building materials include Horizontal Hardi-plank siding, Hardi-board and batten, wood trim, garage doors with transom windows and wood shake appearance asphalt shingle roofing material; no vinyl siding would be used.

- The outdoor amenity space includes fencing, a climbing structure with slide, lawn area, bench seating for supervision, and tree planting.
- On-site, private yards are raised 2 ft. and create a transition from the street level.
- Fencing provides privacy along the south and east property lines.
- The plant list includes native plants, a variety of shrubs, ground cover, vines, perennials, and Honey Locust, the 'theme tree', chosen to pull the landscaping elements together.
- Paving treatment on the central landscaped pedestrian route includes interlocking pavers that offer some permeability.

In response to a Chair query, Mr. Cheng advised that the walkway between the buildings is intended for the residents of the proposed townhouses and is not a public walkway.

In response to a Chair query, Mr. Liu stated that residents of the streetscape units would need to walk across the public lane right-of-way (ROW) to access the amenity area, that pavers had been removed from the plan at staff request, and that there is no identifiable delineation on the lane paving treatment to indicate where pedestrians should walk and where vehicles should drive.

Staff added that Planning and Engineering staff have discussed the idea of decorative paving in the rear lane, but that it is not suggested due to long term maintenance and liability issues.

The Chair expressed concern that, with the outdoor amenity space located at the south end of the site, it would be beneficial to residents to sense they were on a pedestrian, not a vehicular, route.

Discussion ensued between the Chair and Mr. Cheng regarding height, and it was established that:

- All liveable areas of the residential units are above the flood construction level;
- The building height is measured from the crown of Moncton Street; and
- The neighbouring townhouses included the same building height variance for the secondary gabled dormer roof features.

Staff supported the Development Permit application and the variances. Staff advised that:

- Issues of height and vehicle access from Ewen Avenue were raised at the September, 2008 Public Hearing;
- The retaining wall along Moncton Street had been lowered and would not require guardrails. The building height was lowered from the previous 3 ½-storey to 3-storey and the space between the two (2) Moncton buildings was widened;
- The garbage and recycling area was relocated from Ewen Avenue to an internal location;
- The design was improved to better fit into the neighbourhood and the development to the east;
- There is no direct vehicle access from Moncton Street to the site, English Avenue or Ewen Avenue. The development was accessed from the rear lane;
- The variances for reduced side yards do not impact the neighbourhood;

- The variance for increased height for the gable dormers was a result of adding roof articulation and was similar to the development to the east; and
- The variance for tandem parking provides a more functional lower floor, and is similar to the existing development to the east.

The Chair commented that the essential difference between the proposal and the neighbouring townhouse development is that this proposal does not have the pop up 4th-level areas.

Mr. Mike Harper noted that the neighbourhood had expected a private school would be developed and constructed on the site. He expressed concern regarding the Development Permit, new single-family lots, vehicle traffic, and an extended construction period.

In response to Mr. Harper's query regarding English Avenue, staff advised that neither English Avenue, nor Ewen Avenue would be opened up to Moncton Street for vehicle traffic.

Mr. Jeff Jones spoke in favour of the project and noted that the nature and appearance of the project was in keeping with the neighbourhood and would provide a buffer for his residence. Mr. Jones had questions regarding: vehicle access, townhouse development area, and walkways within the site.

In response, staff advised that:

- The development created an extension of the public lane system;
- The proposed Development Permit does not include the new single-family lots to the south. The redevelopment of the original BC Packers office building site includes townhouse zoning and single-family lot zoning;
- A private walkway is included through the site to Moncton Street;
- The existing Ewen Street greenway pedestrian connection to Moncton Street would remain in place. To the west, there is further pedestrian connection to Moncton Street through the Easthope sidewalk system; and
- There was no information at this time regarding the vacant City property to the west.

No public correspondence was received regarding the application.

The Panel agreed with the Chair; that before the application proceeded to Council for consideration, delineation of a pedestrian path to the amenity area be addressed and included in the development plans.

Subsequent to the meeting, the development plans and Servicing Agreement were revised to include a pedestrian path connecting to the outdoor amenity area. The path includes coloured and stamped asphalt in the public lane right-of-way (ROW) and on-site drive aisle, and also includes interlocking pavers in the dedicated pedestrian areas on-site.

The Panel recommends that the Permit be issued.