



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: Richmond City Council
From: John Irving
Chair, Development Permit Panel
Date: July 11, 2019
File: 01-0100-20-DPER1-
01/2019-Vol 01
Re: **Development Permit Panel Meetings Held on June 26, 2019 and July 10, 2019**

Staff Recommendation

That the recommendation of the Panel to authorize the issuance of a Development Permit (DP 11-593871) for the property at 6302 No. 3 Road and 6411 Buswell Street be endorsed, and the Permit so issued.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Irving".

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

SB:blg

Panel Report

The Development Permit Panel considered the following item at its meetings held on June 26, 2019 and July 10, 2019.

DP 11-593871 – IBI ARCHITECTS (CANADA) INC. ON BEHALF OF SOUTH COAST BRITISH COLUMBIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (TRANSLINK) – 6302 NO. 3 ROAD AND 6411 BUSWELL STREET
(June 26, 2019 and July 10, 2019)

The Panel considered a Development Permit (DP) application to permit the construction of a Bus Mall on a site zoned “Downtown Commercial (CDT1)”. A variance is included in the proposal for reduced parking for the existing office building on 6411 Buswell Street.

The application was considered by the Panel at two separate Panel meetings, held on June 26, 2019 and July 10, 2019.

At the Panel meeting held on June 26, 2019, Architect, Salim Narayanan, of IBI Group Architects, and Landscape Architect, Dylan Chernoff, of Durante Kreuk Ltd., provided a brief presentation, noting that:

- Access to the Bus Mall loop is provided from No. 3 Road.
- The Bus Mall includes two bus loading bays on the north side, two unloading bays on the south side, five bus layover bays, a HandyDart bay and three parking stalls for temporary parking of maintenance vehicles.
- A secondary public pedestrian and emergency vehicle access route are provided from the eastern end of the Bus Mall to Buswell Street secured with a statutory Right-of-Way (SRW).
- The Bus Mall is bordered by wide sidewalks on the north and south sides, with the wider north sidewalk connecting to Buswell Street.
- A one-metre fence is provided on the median between the bus loading and unloading bays.
- A mid-block crosswalk provides pedestrian connection from the north side of the Bus Mall to the south side of the Mall and to the proposed Keltic development to the south.
- A fence is provided along the perimeter of the eastern end of the Bus Mall to protect pedestrians from buses turning at the loop.
- A bus shelter and extensive glass canopies along the south frontage of the new Scotia Bank within the Mandarin building are provided along the north side sidewalk of the Bus Mall for weather protection along the passenger pick-up area.
- A 12 ft. high acoustic wall along the eastern end of the Bus Mall is proposed to mitigate noise and block headlight glare from the Bus Mall to the townhouses in the Emporio building to the north. There is a row of trees planted in front of the acoustic wall.
- Trees will be planted adjacent to the sidewalks along both sides of the Bus Mall.
- The proposed planting is intended to mitigate the impact of bus turning and to buffer the pedestrian realm from the vehicular realm, plant species are drought tolerant and easy to maintain.
- Seating is provided in the pedestrian area.

- Proposed decorative paving treatment for the Bus Mall public realm have been coordinated with the paving treatments for the existing Mandarin development to the north and the future Keltic development to the south.
- Some off-site trees on No. 3 Road will need to be relocated or removed for the improvements to No. 3 Road in coordination with City staff.

In reply to Panel queries, Mr. Narayanan, Mr. Chernoff and Chit Vyas, of TransLink, advised that: (i) significant features of the proposed Bus Mall which distinguish it from other TransLink Bus Malls include the installation of fences, continuous stone pavement on the north and south urban plazas, and decorative pedestrian paving along the north and south sidewalks adjacent to the Bus Mall, landscaping, extensive glass canopies, and a significant bus shelter; (ii) the parking needs of tenants of the existing office building on 6411 Buswell Street was evaluated to determine the proposed parking variance from 44 to 25 spaces; (iii) there is no pedestrian connection from the south side of the Bus Mall to Buswell Street; (iv) pedestrians on the south side of the Bus Mall could access Buswell Street through the centre crosswalk and the north sidewalk; (v) the south sidewalk adjacent to the Bus Mall could be extended eastward to connect to Buswell Street subject to the future redevelopment of the property at 6411 Buswell Street to the east of the Bus Mall; (vi) the turning radius at the southbound left-turn lane on No. 3 Road to the Bus Mall entrance has been increased to provide clear sightlines to the pedestrian crosswalk to enhance the safety of pedestrians; (vii) the cantilevered overhead lighting adjacent to the acoustic screen as shown in the architectural rendering is intended to provide lighting along the north sidewalk; (viii) retail spaces along the north side of the Keltic development will interface with the south side of the Bus Mall; and (ix) a prototype overhead electric bus charging station/depot is currently being developed by TransLink and an electric bus charging station could be installed on the Bus Mall subject to its feasibility.

In reply to Panel queries, staff advised that: (i) there are seven short-term parking spaces for the proposed “kiss and ride” drop-off within the Keltic development which is adjacent to the southeast corner of the Bus Mall; (ii) a pedestrian connection is provided from the “kiss and ride” area to the Bus Mall; (iii) there is vehicle access from the “kiss and ride” area to Buswell Street through the adjacent City lane; (iv) pedestrian access from the “kiss and ride” drop-off to the Bus Mall will be through the north plaza within the future Keltic development; and (v) upon redevelopment of the existing office building on 6411 Buswell Street, the extension of the sidewalk along the south side of the Bus Mall up to Buswell Street could be considered.

Staff noted that: (i) a specific Bus Mall Servicing Agreement is associated with the project, which includes on-site and off-site improvements such as improvements to the southbound left turn lane and the median on No. 3 Road, widened sidewalks on No. 3 Road, installation of new traffic signals at the intersection of No. 3 Road and the Bus Mall, and provision of emergency vehicle and public pedestrian access connecting through Buswell Street; (ii) staff support the proposed parking variance due to proximity to the Brighthouse Canada Line Station, ability to function in the past with 30 parking spaces and potential for its redevelopment and reassessment of its parking needs in the future; (iii) the Bus Mall has been designed in the context of its adjacency to the existing Mandarin development to the north and the Keltic development to the south currently under construction; (iv) ground-oriented commercial units within the Keltic development will front the Bus Mall; (v) the Bus Mall and Keltic sidewalk have been designed with the same landscaping and pavement standards; (vi) the applicant has

consulted with the Strata Council of the adjacent Emporio building which was built prior to the Bus Mall being proposed; and (vii) measures have been proposed to mitigate Bus Mall noise impacts including the installation of an acoustic screen adjacent to the Emporio building.

No correspondence was submitted to the Panel regarding the Development Permit application.

No. 3 Road resident Jenny Shao addressed the Panel, expressing concern regarding the proximity of the proposed Bus Mall to high-density residential developments and existing low density of planting along the north sidewalk adjacent to the Bus Mall which could be enhanced to mitigate potential noise.

With regard to Ms. Shao's concerns, the Chair advised that the existing development to the north and the development to the south currently under construction have been designed in consideration of the future construction of the Bus Mall.

With regard to Ms. Shao's concerns, staff noted that: (i) the spacing of street trees to be planted will be consistent with the City standard; (ii) 24 street trees, majority of which are Pin Oak trees, are proposed to be planted along both sides of the Bus Mall adjacent to the sidewalks; and (iii) the Bus Mall functions as an enhanced City Centre street and has been designed as such.

In reply to a Panel query, staff confirmed that acoustic measures to address potential noise from the future Bus Mall were incorporated into the design of residential units in the "Mandarin" building through the Development Permit process.

A resident of one of the townhouses in the "Emporio" building at 6351 Buswell Street addressed the Panel, expressing concerns regarding: (i) whether the height of the proposed acoustic screen adjacent to the building would effectively control Bus Mall noise at the upper levels of townhouses; (ii) whether engine idling of stationary buses on the Bus Mall is allowed; (iii) whether a future connection for buses from the Bus Mall to Buswell Street will be provided; and (iv) whether there are proposed measures to control pedestrian access and traffic along the north-south lane to the north of the Bus Mall to address the Emporio residents' safety and security concerns.

With regard to the resident's concerns, the Chair advised that as decided by Council, there will be no bus connection to Buswell Street; however, emergency vehicle access will be provided.

In reply to Panel queries, Mr. Narayanan and Emmanuel SanMiguel, of IBI Group Architects, and Mr. Vyas, of Translink, advised that: (i) the height of the proposed acoustic wall adjacent to the Emporio townhouses was increased from 8 ft. to 12 ft. in response to staff and Advisory Design Panel recommendations; (ii) the increased height of the acoustic wall adjacent to the townhouses is more than sufficient to provide a noise barrier for the Bus Mall as indicated in the Acoustic Report; (iii) the intensity of noise coming from the Bus Mall is expected to be highest near the townhouses due to its proximity to the Bus Mall cul-de-sac where buses generate significant noise when turning; (iv) the Acoustic Report indicates that the proposed acoustic screen will significantly decrease the noise impacts of the Bus Mall on adjacent townhouses; (v) the Acoustic Report does not mention the potential noise reduction to townhouse outdoor spaces as it focuses on noise reduction to townhouse indoor spaces; (vi) the proposed acoustic barrier will result in buses sounding as though they are two or three times far away; (vii) idling of buses

on the Bus Mall is not allowed by TransLink; and (viii) the buses on the Bus Mall will cover six bus routes with trip frequencies matching the Canada Line commuter loads.

In response to the resident's concern regarding safety and security along the north-south lane to the north of the Bus Mall, staff noted that vehicle access from the lane to the Bus Mall is not permitted. In addition, Mr. Narayanan confirmed that removable steel bollards at the south end of the lane provide access only to emergency vehicles and pedestrians can access the lane from the south end of the lane.

Buswell Street resident, Carmelita Chan, addressed the Panel querying: (i) whether bus stops along Buswell Street will be relocated to No. 3 Road with the construction of the proposed Bus Mall; (ii) whether consideration has been given to mitigate Bus Mall noise impacts on 6380 Buswell Street to the east across Buswell Street; and (iii) whether a pedestrian connection will be installed in the future from 6380 Buswell Street to Cooney Road.

In reply to Ms. Chan's queries, staff noted that: (i) the primary intention of the Bus Mall is to take passengers getting off at the Brighthouse Canada Line Station; (ii) all existing bus routes and stops around the proposed Bus Mall area will be retained; (iii) the buses on the Bus Mall will be turning away from the existing development at the cul-de-sac; and (iv) the City Centre Area Plan does identify a long-term vision for a future pedestrian connection from the Brighthouse Canada Line Station on No. 3 Road to Cooney Road subject to the redevelopment of adjacent properties.

In addition, Mr. Narayanan advised that the Bus Mall will function as a regular City street except that buses turning at the cul-de-sac.

The application was referred back for the applicant to: (i) review the noise impacts of the proposed Bus Mall to neighbouring residents; (ii) address concerns reported by neighbouring residents; and (iii) report back to the July 10, 2019 Development Permit Panel meeting.

At the Development Permit Panel meeting held on July 10, 2019, Mr. Narayanan and Engineer Aaron Peterson, of Brown Strachan Associates, provided a brief presentation, noting:

- The proposed acoustic screen will be 12 ft. high and approximately 90 ft. long.
- Noise within the line of sight to buses in the Bus Mall through the proposed acoustic barrier would be reduced by 5 to 10 decibels (dB).
- The expected noise level of the fourth floor rooftop patios of townhouses within the Emporio Building will be from 55db to 60db which is similar to the typical noise levels for a townhouse facing the street.
- The estimated noise level of the fourth floor rooftop patios is 55dB and will not be reduced by the proposed acoustic screen; however, the existing balustrade around the rooftop patios provides a noise buffer.
- The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) requirements for interior noise level for the Emporio townhouses could be met without the proposed acoustical screen which provides an additional noise buffer for interior spaces beyond the City's requirements.

Staff noted that: (i) staff have verified the acoustical measures for the Emporio Building; and (ii) staff support the use of the subject site for the construction of a Bus Mall which is consistent with the City Centre Area Plan (CCAP).

In reply to Panel queries, staff advised that: (i) temporary washroom facilities for transit operators are provided within the Mandarin development directly to the north of the Bus Mall; (ii) permanent washroom facilities for transit operators and the public are planned to be incorporated into the future redevelopment of the TransLink-owned property at 6411 Buswell Street, located directly to the east of the Bus Mall; (iii) the existing employee washroom at the Canada Line Brighthouse Station is made available to the public upon request to TransLink employees; (iii) TransLink is currently reviewing how public washrooms could be integrated into all major transit facilities; and (iv) there is no clear timeline for the redevelopment of the TransLink-owned property at 6411 Buswell Street and the provision of public washrooms within the property.

As a result of the discussion, staff were directed to discuss the timeline for the future redevelopment of 6411 Buswell Street property with TransLink staff.

In reply to Panel queries, Mr. Narayanan and Mr. Peterson advised: (i) the temporary washroom facilities within the Mandarin development are exclusively for the use of TransLink employees and additional washroom facilities will be provided in the future redevelopment of 6411 Buswell Street property; (ii) the acoustical study referenced the interior design criteria of the Canada Home Mortgage Corporation (CHMC) and that actual bus noise measurements were conducted in a TransLink bus exchange in North Vancouver; (iii) the determination of the expected bus noise level in the proposed Bus Mall was based on a worst case scenario with all diesel engine buses; (iv) the proposed acoustic screen was intended to provide an acoustic buffer to possible Bus Mall noise, e.g. noise from bus tires and diesel engines, for the lower levels of the Emporio townhouses directly facing the Bus Mall and not for the townhouses' rooftop patios; (v) the original design of the Emporio Building was intended to achieve the City's interior design criteria; (vi) further improvements to the design of the proposed acoustic screen, e.g., adding another layer for the acoustic screen, could be considered by TransLink should the expected noise reduction not be achieved by the current design of the acoustic screen; (vii) mechanisms are currently in place, such as the conduct of regular inspections by TransLink supervisors, to ensure bus operators' compliance with TransLink's Vehicle Idling Policy that limits vehicle idling to a maximum of three minutes; (viii) complaints from the public are fully attended to by TransLink and TransLink would address the design of the acoustic screen if it did not perform to the acoustic standards outlined by the acoustic engineer; (ix) TransLink organized a meeting with the Strata Council of the Emporio Building prior to the June 26, 2019 meeting of the Development Permit Panel; however, some residents were not able to attend; (x) TransLink offered to organize another meeting but was deemed not necessary by the Strata Council; and (xi) TransLink directly contacted Mr. Jett Tung, an Emporio Building resident, and exchanged e-mail messages with him to address his concerns regarding possible Bus Mall noise impacts on townhouses.

Correspondence was submitted to the Panel regarding the Development Permit application between Buswell resident, Jett Tung, Drew Ferraro and Chit Vyas, of TransLink, and Aaron Peterson, of Brown Strachan Associates.

In reply to a Panel query, staff advised that the applicant had responded to Mr. Tung's concerns.

The Panel expressed support for the project and appreciated the applicant's provision of additional information regarding the proposed acoustical measures to mitigate noise in the Bus Mall, willingness to introduce additional noise mitigation measures if necessary, and efforts to address neighbouring residents' concerns identified at the Panel's previous meeting.

Subsequent to the Panel meeting, Mr. Vyas advised that it is not known at this time when the TransLink-owned property at 6411 Buswell Street will be redeveloped.

The Panel recommends the Permit be issued.