



MINUTES
planNANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 2010-JUN-15 AT 5:00 PM
BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL, 455 WALLACE STREET

PRESENT:

Bill Holdom, Chair
Carey Avender
Chris Erb
John Hofman
Shirley Lance
Pete Sabo
Randall Taylor

Brian Anderson
Allan Davidson
Jane Gregory
Ric Kelm
Ralph Meyerhoff
Nadine Schwager
Joan Wagner

REGRETS:

Sarah Boyd
Darwin Mahlum

Michael Harrison
Michael Schellinck

STAFF:

Andrew Tucker, Director of Planning
Deborah Jensen, Community Development Planner, Community Planning
Sheila Herrera, Planner, Current Planning
Dave Stewart, Planner, Current Planning
Cindy Hall, Recording Secretary

OTHER:

Rick Jones, Urban Design Group Architects Ltd.
Cheryl Fu, Urban Design Group Architects Ltd.
Representatives from First Capital Corporation
Gordon Gonske
Maureen Pilcher, Maureen Pilcher & Associates
Representatives from Great West Developments Ltd.
Ian Niamath, Architect

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Minutes from 2010-MAY-18

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by C. Erb that the Minutes from 2010-MAY-18 be adopted. CARRIED

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items

MOVED by J. Gregory, SECONDED by S. Lance that the Agenda be approved as presented. CARRIED

4. Correspondence

None.

5. Presentations

None.

6. Information Items**a. Previous Rezoning Applications****i. RA218 – 5220 Metral Drive**

D. Jensen advised that this application to rezone from RS-1 to CD-6 for construction of a mixed use commercial, office and residential development, came before PNAC in September 2007 and PNAC recommended approval to Council. Council adopted the OCP amendment bylaw on 2007-DEC-17, and subsequent zoning amendment bylaw on 2010-MAY-17.

ii. RA206 – 2124 and 2126 Northfield Road

D. Jensen advised that this application to rezone from I-1 to C-31 for construction of a mixed use commercial and multi-family residential development, came before PNAC in June 2007 and PNAC recommended approval to Council. Council adopted the OCP amendment bylaw on 2007-SEP-10, and subsequent zoning amendment bylaw on 2010-JUN-07.

iii. RA211 – 970 and 972 Brechin Road

D. Jensen advised that this application to rezone from RM-1 to RM-2 for a fourplex came before PNAC on September 2009 and PNAC recommended approval to Council. Council adopted the corresponding zoning amendment bylaw on 2010-JUN-07.

MOVED by N.Schwager, SECONDED by C. Avender to receive the verbal reports regarding RA218, RA206 and RA211. CARRIED

7. Old Business

None.

8. New Business**a. Rezoning Applications****i. RA223 – 650 Terminal Avenue (Port Place Mall)**

Redevelopment of a portion of the Port Place Mall site.

S. Herrera introduced this application. She noted that the application, which came before PNAC previously, has been modified by changing the location of the highrise building. The amended proposal requests the addition of an 'h' sub-designation for the northeast corner of the site.

R. Jones noted that since PNAC's previous review of the application, a few modifications have become necessary. The City's Engineering and Planning Departments have requested they consider widening Front Street to accommodate additional width for bike lanes, a 10-ft. wide sidewalk, landscaping, and a roundabout. The relocation of the highrise tower takes into consideration the resulting loss of parking to the anchor tenants and maintains the residential density with the addition of two storeys over a portion of the commercial area (the 'main' street) . There were many technical issues with the roundabout proposal, so it was decided to construct a lighted intersection at Front Street, and to revisit the roundabout suggestion in the future.

Committee Comments

The Committee inquired about public transportation through the site, how the original highrise zone was located, the effect of the proposed highrise on view corridors, and whether shadow/sun studies were done.

R. Jones advised that an engineering study was done. The bus stop near the current parking garage will be maintained, and bus stops will be added on Front Street. The applicant had suggested that a bus route traverse the site, but the City's Engineering Department indicated Transit had rejected the proposal. B. Holdom noted that he will ask the RDN's transit committee about this.

Regarding the location of the highrise zone, A. Tucker advised that when the Downtown Plan was prepared in 1991, mapping was not as accurate as it is today, and the areas included for highrises were somewhat general in nature. The applicant is requesting the addition of an 'h' sub-designation on the site where the highrise will be located.

R. Jones advised that the proposed location of the highrise will not fall within the view corridors.

C. Fu presented shadow studies for different times of the year, indicating a two-hour shadow on the Cameron Island development from 2-4 pm.

The Committee inquired when the highrise would be built, and whether the highrise design had already been considered by the Design Advisory Panel.

S. Jones replied that following improvements to the existing mall building, the anchor tenants would be relocated. Demolition of the remainder of the site would then occur, followed by construction of commercial buildings, the residences and the highrise.

A. Tucker clarified that the first phase of the redevelopment has gone through the development permit stage because a rezoning was not required. The Design Advisory Panel has not yet considered the highrise because of the required rezoning.

MOVED by B. Anderson, SECONDED by J. Gregory to recommend that Council approve RA223.

The Committee requested staff's opinion on the application. A. Tucker advised that staff would have preferred the highrise building in an alternate location. However, they recognize the constraints the applicant has been put under by anchor tenants. As the proposal does meet the guidelines, and is outside of view corridors, they are not opposed to it.

CARRIED

R. Jones, C. Fue and the representatives from the First Capital Corporation left the meeting.

- ii. RA246 – 730 Stirling Avenue
To allow for a fourplex.

S. Herrera introduced this application.

G. Gonske advised that multi-family dwellings exist in the surrounding area, including rental housing operated by BC Housing, and duplexes. He has discussed his proposal with the Harewood Neighbourhood Association representative, who did not have any concerns with it.

Committee Comments

The Committee inquired about the size of the proposed building, whether all setbacks will be met, and what storm water system will be used.

G. Gonske advised that the building will be approximately 9000 ft² and the units will be 1400 ft² with the maximum floor area ratio being utilized. All required setbacks will be adhered to. A covenant will be placed on the development to have storm water run into a rock pit and then go by pipe into the nearby stream.

MOVED by R. Taylor, SECONDED by C. Erb to recommend that Council approve RA246. CARRIED

G. Gonske left the meeting.

- iii. RA242 – 440 Wakesiah Avenue
To allow for a student housing development.

S. Herrera introduced the application.

M. Pilcher advised the project would consist of 26 micro-suites (300-400 ft²), including two handicapped suites, which will house 38 students. The suites would either be one-bedroom or two-bedroom, and contain a kitchenette and a three-piece bathroom. Each floor would have a common lounge, a full kitchen, and a laundry room. A housing agreement will be utilized to outline the conditions and management of the building, and is being discussed with the City.

The building will be directly located across from the University and on a major transit route. All required services to students are located within easy walking distance to the building. Thirteen parking spaces will be provided as well as secure and covered bicycle storage. All vehicle access to the site will be from the access lane at the rear of the property.

It is expected that the building will utilize innovative design and energy conscious construction methods as well as incorporating water use reduction strategies and energy saving features. On-site storm water management and oil/water separators for parking lot drainage will be incorporated into the design.

Height and massing of the building will be sensitive to the impact on surrounding residential properties, and a detailed landscape plan will be submitted.

A letter of support has been received from the Harewood Neighbourhood Association. A public meeting for all surrounding property owners will be held in July.

I. Niamath circulated renderings of what the building will look like.

Committee Comments

The Committee voiced concerns about the proposed building's windows looking onto adjacent buildings, and vice versa. They also questioned how the parking ratio was determined.

M. Pilcher advised that parking requirements are still being discussed with City staff. As there presently is no zone for student housing, and therefore no set parking ratio, they are researching what the correct parking ratio might be. In comparison, the parking ratio for senior's housing is 0.25. She noted that international students don't traditionally drive cars.

A Committee member commented that it is also important to consider the maximum density range. If the units were made larger, the 50-150 units per hectare allowance in the OCP's Corridor designation would still be met. This development is very high density and needs more thought.

M. Pilcher advised that this proposal uses the same model as the University campus. In response to a concern about how the building could be used solely for students, M. Pilcher advised that a covenant could be placed on it restricting it to student housing, and that you would have to be a bonafide student at a recognized facility in Nanaimo to live there.

A. Tucker advised that the City presently does not have a zone for off-campus student housing, and that it may be appropriate to create one. With the OCP being based on conventionally sized units (1000 ft²–1200 ft²), consideration needs to be given to whether massing of the building with more people fits within the Corridor designation. Considering the proposed building will be directly across the street from the University, unit size and parking ratio are also issues PNAC needs to determine whether they could support.

R. Kelm advised that the proponent is not affiliated with VIU, and that VIU had housing vacancies in the spring semester.

I. Niamath stated that the VIU International Student Housing Coordinator had advised of students utilizing off-campus accommodation such as the Howard Johnson Hotel, and basement suites in poor condition. This proposal is an attempt to provide for better off-campus student housing.

The Committee commented they would need to review the new zone first with regards to how it is managed and how the City will monitor it, before they can move this application forward. A plan is needed for this area, and questioned how this model would fit into a single-family area. They also stated that communication is required with the University regarding off-campus housing, and were concerned about interface and how to bring it into place so as to not have spot zoning.

I. Niamath replied that this development would provide a unique opportunity to change the character of the area. It is so close to the University that it is a natural evolution, and they hope the residents of the area understand that and take advantage of it for their properties also, creating a 'university district'.

M. Pilcher added the majority of houses in this area are rentals, so the area already appears to be in transition.

A. Tucker stated that it is very common in university towns to have 'town gown' interface with buildings similar to the one proposed, as well as a variety of other uses; this is the first attempt in Nanaimo for this type of use. He stated that with the Corridor zones being proposed in the new Zoning Bylaw, a student housing zone may also be considered.

MOVED by J. Gregory, SECONDED by S. Lance that PNAC approve the proposal in principle. PNAC also requested a zone for 'student housing' be presented to PNAC prior to the application proceeding to Council.

A. Tucker clarified that the zone for student housing would be similar to a comprehensive development zone; student housing could also be written in as a permitted use in an existing zone.

M. Pilcher stated they would be willing to proceed under a comprehensive development zone.

A Committee member stated that 13 parking spaces are too many for this building.

A.Tucker advised that the new zone would be brought to the next PNAC meeting to be held on 2010-JUL-13.

CARRIED

b. Neighbourhood Plans

i. OCP052 – South End Neighbourhood Plan Update

D. Jensen advised that this plan is virtually complete. It will be going to an open house on 2010-JUN-17, and a draft neighbourhood plan will be provided to PNAC for their 2010-JUL-13 meeting. It is anticipated PNAC will make a recommendation in September to take forward to Council.

ii. OCP053 – Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan Update

D. Jensen advised that a newsletter will be sent out with some of the elements proposed for the draft neighbourhood plan. An open house will be held in September, after which the plan will go to PNAC for review and recommendation to Council.

MOVED by R. Meyerhoff, SECONDED by A. Davidson to receive the updates on the neighbourhood plans. CARRIED

c. Zoning Bylaw Update

i. Process Review

D. Stewart distributed a handout outlining the Zoning Bylaw rewrite goals and objectives, timeline, description of zones, and overview of Part 7 (Residential Zones). A draft copy of the Zoning Bylaw will go to PNAC on 2010-JUL-13, and then to a public open house in the fall.

Committee Comments

The Committee inquired whether single family floor area ratio will be amended, whether there is the potential of reduced development cost charges for developers doing their own water reduction on site, and whether there will be new landscape design guidelines.

D. Stewart advised that floor area ratio will be retained, but that staff are looking for feedback from PNAC on this topic. The subject of development cost charges cannot be dealt with in the Zoning Bylaw, and green design guidelines are presently being written. Landscaping guidelines would fit within the Zoning Bylaw. However, on meeting with landscape architects, it was determined that native landscaping is not a preference for this area.

Staff will attempt to provide PNAC members with a hard copy of the draft Zoning Bylaw prior to 2010-JUL-02.

ii. Council Referral re RV Parking

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of PNAC was re-scheduled from 2010-JUL-20 to **2010-JUL-13.**

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

File: 0360-20-P07-02

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APPROVED:

Chair

Date