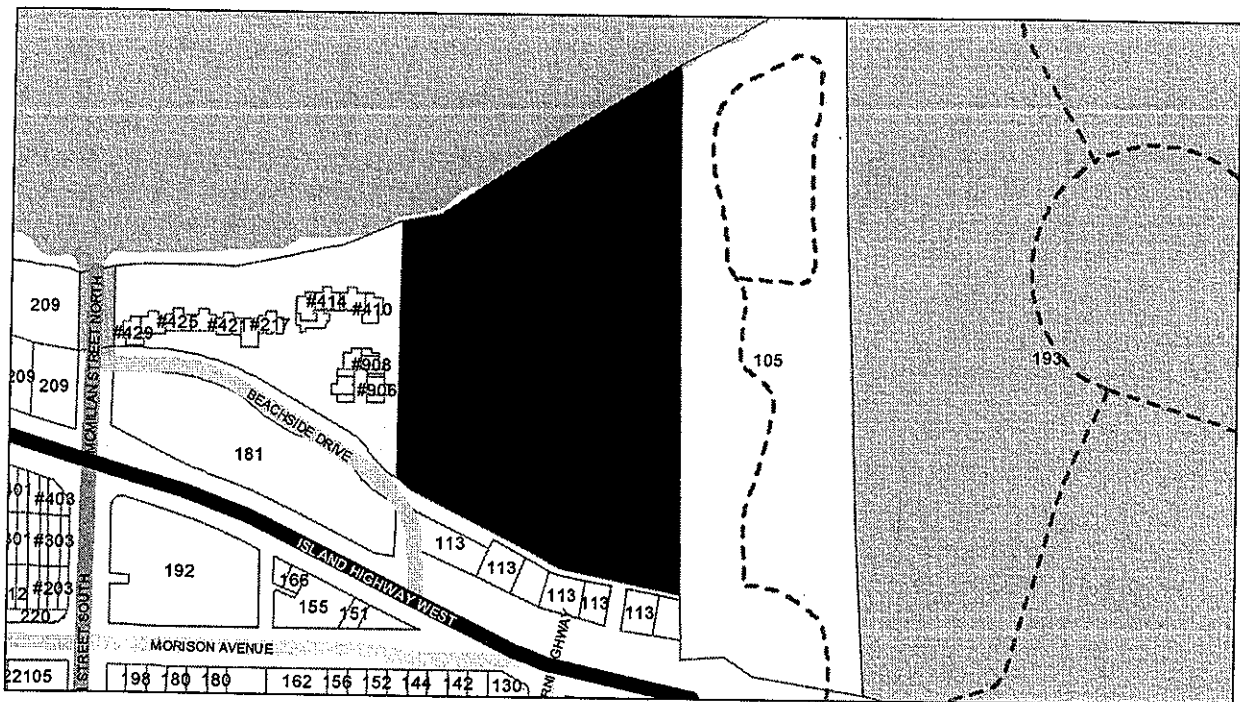


September 23, 2010

REPORT TO: F. C. MANSON, C.G.A., CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

FROM: G. A. JACKSON, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY PLANNING

SUBJECT: PARKSVILLE BEACH MOTEL ZONING AMENDMENT APPLICATION ON LOT 1, DISTRICT LOT 89, NANOOSE DISTRICT, PLAN VIP78996 (161 ISLAND HIGHWAY WEST)
REGISTERED OWNER: PARKSVILLE BEACH DEVELOPMENT INC., INC. NO. 683777
APPLICANT: NIGEL GRAY (MACDONALD GRAY CONSULTANTS)
PLANNING FILE: 3360-09-02



Issue:

Consideration of next steps in processing Parksville Beach Motel Zoning Amendment application

Executive Summary:

Processing of the Parksville Beach Motel zoning amendment application has resulted in some significant issues being identified. Staff is seeking Council's direction as to how to proceed.

**PARKSVILLE BEACH MOTEL ZONING AMENDMENT
APPLICATION ON 161 ISLAND HIGHWAY WEST**

References:

Concept Plan, The Watermark, prepared by MacDonald Gray Consultants date stamped received July 15, 2010;
July 21, 2010 Macdonald Gray Consultants letter with Open House comments and "sign in sheets";
The Sustainable Community Builder Checklist date stamp received August 14, 2009;
Correspondence from Nigel Gray, Macdonald Gray date stamp received July 15, 2010;
Memorandum from the Marc Norris, Deputy Fire Chief, dated July 28, 2010;
Memorandum from Fred Pakkala, Engineering Technologist, dated September 1, 2010;
Memorandum from G.A. Jackson, Director of Community Planning dated July 30, 2010.

Background:

On August 13, 2009 the City received a zoning and Official Community Plan amendment application for the Parksville Beach Motel site. This initial proposal did not comply with the City's future road network plans under Council Resolution #06-304.¹ The proposal did not meet the City's Official Community Plan requirements and therefore triggered section 4.10.1.2.3. which required Council's immediate direction. Both of these matters required addressing ahead of the file being able to proceed through a routine development review process.

On November 18th Council (Resolution #09-280) directed Staff to find other options to the proposed road network. The City's Consultant, who was at that time undertaking the overall transportation study, was asked to examine the particular topic of whether the Alberni Highway connection to Beachside Drive was critical. Council rescinded the original road network plan (February 15th Resolution #06-304) which was to continue the Alberni Highway to connect with Beachside Drive because the Consultant concluded that the connector from the Alberni Highway was not critical for the development to proceed. The Consultant had concluded that the McMillan intersection could handle the traffic volume of the Beach Club and the proposed development, at a reduced level of service, and Beachside Drive would provide a through connection to continue the road network in the future.

Council replaced Resolution #06-304 with Resolution #10-044 which reads as follows:

"10-044 THAT the report from the Director of Engineering and Operations dated February 8, 2010 for consideration of the connection of Beachside Drive to the Alberni Highway at the Island Highway West be received;
AND THAT Council rescind resolution 06-304;
AND THAT staff be directed to proceed with extension of Beachside Drive from McMillan through to Corfield Street, as opportunities through redevelopment or other funding mechanisms become available to achieve this goal;
AND THAT staff be directed to bring forward an application for Council's consideration for the revised road standard for Beachside Drive. CARRIED."

With respect to the Official Community Plan non-compliance issue, Council on February 15th, 2010 adopted Resolution #10-068 directing Staff to continue processing. With direction being provided on these two key issues, Staff commenced processing of the routine file issues.

¹ The submission was also incomplete with respect to the servicing submission requirements. A minor height variance was also requested.

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The applicant appeared at the Advisory Planning Commission on April 15, 2010 and presented the proposal. The Advisory Planning Commission passed a motion to table the application to its next meeting. Before this 'next' meeting took place the applicant significantly changed their application to one which they believe is compliant with the Official Community Plan. Note that the original application was to rezone from Tourist Commercial (CS-2) to High Density Residential (RS-3), being a proposal for 100% residential use. The revised application would be a mixed use development with up to 50% permanent residential and overall would require a new Mixed Waterfront Commercial-Residential zone. The 'revised' application was submitted on July 15th, 2010. It was substantially different from the original one. The applicant hosted a public open house on July 20th and indicated that there were approximately 100 attendees. They have provided their attendance sign-up sheet and comments which are attached.

Staff has reviewed the revised proposal in detail and has generated Departmental comments which are attached. The review to date has highlighted three topics:

1. If this development proceeds there is an imminent need to continue Beachside Drive in order to provide a functional and safe road network. To continue Beachside Drive in the manner that has been endorsed by Council involves the acquisition of right of way across the private property to the east of the site and also through the Community Park. The developer has indicated that it is not possible for him to establish the Beachside Drive continuation. This situation puts the City in the position of having to revisit the road network topic since Staff believes that the development cannot proceed without some resolution to the road network.
2. The revised proposal itself reveals many and varied technical issues and questions which require addressing. City Departmental review comments are attached. Even if these topics can be addressed on their own, the road network issue is a 'show stopper' if it cannot be addressed. Therefore these issues are intertwined.
3. The Official Community Plan policies, upon which this development is based, are likely to come under considerable scrutiny and possibly revision during the Official Community Plan update process.

Options:

Council may:

1. Support in principle that the interconnection of the road network should occur concurrently with the redevelopment of this site.
2. Request that the applicant develop options for one or both of:
 - a. the Alberni Highway connection to Beachside Drive, and/or
 - b. the Beachside Drive connector through to the existing roadway in the Community Park;
3. Deny the application in consideration of the scope of issues.
4. Provide alternate direction.

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Analysis:

The City has been working to ensure that a strong local access road network is constructed in conjunction with development as it proceeds in this area. The area is strategically important to the City as a Community and public amenity and is one of the key gateways for views and access to the water from the downtown. In this regard, the Beach Club development proceeded on the basis of a full movement signalized access at McMillan Street and right in/right out access to the parking garage from the Island Highway at its eastern edge. This access is also currently built to enable secondary emergency access to Beachside Drive on a temporary basis and is steeper than desirable, at approximately 15%, to form a permanent public road access to Beachside Drive. The proximity of this site to both McMillan and the right in/right out access made the establishment of the overall waterfront road network less urgent than it is for the subject site, which is now at the end of a dead end road.

As Council is aware from previous discussions in this regard, a permanent access link is required to interconnect Beachside Drive with the local road network to the east. Wherever possible the design solution should not only link to a signalized access with the Island Highway to enable vehicular and emergency access, it should also enable pedestrian and cyclist movements to the beach from downtown at reasonable grades (currently the very steep bank contributes to creating a barrier to movement) and work toward breaking down some of the perceived barriers the Highway and steep bank creates between the water and the downtown. There are two more apparent workable solutions to interconnect Beachside Drive to the east, both of which have been the subject of previous reports to Council:

1. Extend Beachside Drive through to the existing Community Park roadway to the east along the top of the bank, leaving sufficient space between the Island Highway and Beachside Drive to incorporate some of the community plan vision for plazas, view corridors, low scale retail/commercial and the provision of parking integrated into the slope through a parking structure.
2. Interconnect Beachside Drive to the Island Highway aligned with Alberni Highway, providing for a strong link to the waterfront at gentle/gradual grades by transitioning to existing ground levels along the extent of the developments' Beachside Drive frontage and into the proposed development site.

In 2009 the current applicant approached the City to request that Council rescind its previous direction which was to interconnect Beachside Drive with the Island Highway at Alberni Highway (as outlined in item 2 above), for a number of reasons and in particular due to the land impact/intrusion into the development lands of the roadway designs considered at the time. In response, Engineering had a review undertaken by a traffic consultant, Boulevard Transportation, which indicated from a traffic volume perspective the McMillan and Island Highway intersection could handle the traffic volume of the Beach Club and the proposed development albeit at a decreased level of service. The City's consultant also indicated that a Beachside Drive connection through to the Park to the east was assumed to eventually be made. Based on the developer's request and this review, the City's Engineering Department recommended and Council rescinded Council's previous direction to interconnect Beachside Drive to Alberni and affirmed direction to connect Beachside Drive to Corfield. This by default means that Beachside Drive will need to be connected through the Community Park. The applicant, however, has now indicated an inability to facilitate this connection since other private property is involved, and has concluded that "A connection of Beachside Drive through to the Community Park is not possible at this time" (July 15th, Macdonald Gray correspondence).

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The City's Engineering Department feels strongly that either one of the two road connection options outlined above are required in support of this application to ensure that an adequate road network is in place to support the development in the short and long term and to adequately accommodate pedestrian and cycling access and mobility in the area, and as such, the development may be premature. Should the applicant wish to revisit Option 2 above (an Alberni connection) and look at design options that do not necessitate additional road dedication into the development lands the Engineering Department is willing to advance a further policy report to Council in this regard. In either case, the community planning principles need to be incorporated into the design in accordance with current City vision documents. The Beachside Drive continuation would leave the City owned lots in tact for future public use and enhancement and as such provides a few more opportunities for these public lands.

The continuation of Beachside Drive to Corfield at this time would involve acquisition of a right of way over private property and also through the Community Park². Funds are not budgeted for this purpose and have not yet been estimated. \$457,000.00 remains in the 2011 budget as a carry-over from the Alberni Highway connector proposal.

The impact of not having either connection constructed in conjunction with the project given the layout and scope of the development, will mean a congested and compromised road network which could impact emergency response, compromise traffic flow, and impact both the Beach Club development and the permanent residents of the proposed development and the community.

Apart from the "big picture" issues of the road network and Official Community Plan [review] there are a number of issues that the specific proposal raises. A considered review of the three Departmental memos provides the scope and range of issues. The subject property is perhaps the most visible and highest profile property in the City. For this reason alone there are issues that another site may not attract. To take the proposal to the next level will take the time and cooperation of the applicant. Despite that the applicant believes that this application is Official Community Plan compliant, Staff believes there remain questions of Community benefit and amenities that require further exploration. Although it is a rezoning that is under review, the high profile nature makes design considerations inextricably linked to the process and appropriate to consider up front. To date the applicant has pressured for an expedited process which suggests that working through further issues may not be within their allotted timeline.

Denial of this application is appropriate should Council believe that the various issues outlined cannot be overcome at this time. Given the breadth and scope of the issues Staff believes that may be the case.

Financial Implications:

Processing of this application is intended to be covered by the application fee. Should Council wish to reinstate the Alberni Highway connector or divert funds to the Beachside Drive continuation, there remains \$457,000.00 in the 2011 Capital budget for the Alberni Highway extension as a carry-over from the 2010 budget which could be made available to contribute towards these works. This is not expected to cover the cost of this work.

² As in the Community Park Master Plan, adopted by Council on April 19, 2006, Council Resolution #06-089.

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Sustainability Implications:

Evaluating this topic comprehensively would warrant a separate report. The applicant has provided a sustainability checklist which provides their perspective. Greater issues to consider would be the impact of the use on the Community, the impact of the built form (which includes an underground parking structure) in a floodplain area subject to sea level rise. A detailed archaeological impact assessment or comment cannot be made at this stage.

Recommend:

That the report from the Director of Community Planning, dated September 23, 2010 entitled "Parksville Beach Motel Zoning Amendment Application on Lot 1, District Lot 89, Nanoose District, Plan VIP78996 (161 Island Highway West)" be received;

And That Council's direction is sought.

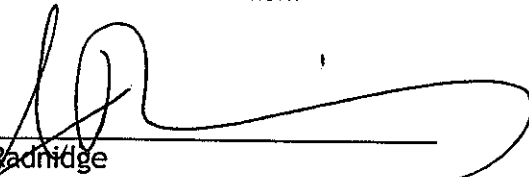

G. A. JACKSON

GAJ/sh
Attachments

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A/DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING:

Engineering feels strongly that either one of the two road connection options, an Alberni connection or an extension of Beachside Drive to the Community Park, should proceed concurrently with this development application in order to ensure that an adequate road network is in place to support the development in the short and long term, to adequately accommodate pedestrian and cycling access and mobility in the area, and to work toward breaking down the ongoing barriers between the downtown and the beach.


I. Radridge

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER COMMENTS:


F. MANSON, C.G.A.