

CITY OF PARKSVILLE
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: July 29, 2010
Time: 2:00 pm
Place: Parksville Community & Conference Centre,
Garry Oaks Room - 132 Jensen Avenue East
Chair: M. Lafoy

Members Present:

<u> X </u>	M. LaFoy	<u> X </u>	L. Taylor
<u> X </u>	R. Galdames	<u> X </u>	L. Locke
<u> </u>	D. Firouzli		

Others:

B. Russell, Manager of Current Planning
M. Baillie, MAIBC, AIA - Landmark Architecture Ltd.
M. Fenton, MAIBC - Landmark Architecture Ltd.

One member of the public attended.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 pm by the Chair.

2. Development Review of Parksville Family Place (499 Island Highway West)

Legal: Lots 7 and 10, District Lot 70 and 106, Nanoose District, except Plan 5440, VIP52582, Plan 2867

Applicant: Monica Baillie, MAIBC, AIA - Landmark Architecture Ltd.

Owner: School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

Planning File: 3060-10-01

Applicant Presentation:

A presentation by M. Baillie described the above-mentioned proposal to the Advisory Design Panel as follows:

A courtesy presentation to the Advisory Design Panel is intended to make the project a better fit with the neighbourhood.

[Staff explained that the institutional use is not subject to a development permit under legislation, but the architect representing the School District project had agreed to voluntarily present the proposal to the Advisory Design Panel to gain an understanding of the local architectural vernacular and achieve a better fit with the neighbourhood.]

The project has been 10 years in the making between the three organizations involved. The three organizations are School District No. 69 (Qualicum), the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Two years ago a business plan was established to enable them to setup shop.

The site will provide a number of services such as baby immunization, youth clinic and space for adult oriented learning. Configuring the space for the three tenants has been ongoing and some internal changes are still underway.

The target date for the building is December, 2011.

The green nature of the project is intended to put the 'park' back in Parksville. It will provide a green space along the highway. The building is a (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) proposal.

The property is zoned P-1. The current site is unsafe for pedestrians as there are no internal sidewalks or pedestrian paths.

The existing buildings have an industrial warehouse look about them.

[A description of the current layout was provided with reference to a site plan]

Access on Bay Street is proposed to be right-in/right-out.

We can't control the traffic and have suggested that the City may wish to put in a traffic light.

A single driveway exit exists at Willow Road.

It is our understanding that there is a need for the Temple Street extension. The proposed layout does not preclude this, but it would impact the available parking on the site.

There will be 17 staff members that are based out of the site but don't work from the site and are mostly in the field.

There will be 26 VIHA staff members, mostly internal, but some in the field.

There will be 45 Provincial staff, in the field a lot.

Lots of the clients can't afford vehicles and we therefore suspect that more parking is being provided than will actually get used.

Transit map shows the bus service is available in the area.

[Bike route and pedestrian path through the site indicated]

The old administration building is to remain. The forestry building and shed are to be removed.

The site is well treed and will be retaining as much vegetation as possible. We will be retaining the old administration building. There are many existing trees, a small crushed gravel path and it has a southern exposure.

Three previous designs were developed for the project. At one point a tudor style design was being considered. A modern design with underground parking was also looked at. The underground parking was axed due to cost. The current design is a big farmhouse look to fit in with the adjacent residential neighbourhood.

We now have the whole site to develop, but have no funding. We have gone with Option F, the big house look.

The existing steel building will be retained. We are looking at a possible green wall [trellises with vines] to enhance the industrial look of the steel building.

We are looking to combine the look of Granville Island with a rural farmhouse look.

We have a restrictive budget.

The site does have carpool parking and is wheelchair accessible.

There is a clinic on the west side of the building. The bottom floor will be primarily meeting rooms and small offices to meet with clientele. The upstairs portion of the building will be an open floor plan of various offices. Access to the second floor will be provided by stairs and an elevator.

[Elevation shown again]

For the small building, we are looking at a green screen, possibly vine on chain link. The entrance would be through the green screen in a fanciful form.

It will be a big, rural house look with a trendy Granville Island influence. Feature materials will be hardie panel and asphalt shingle. We are trying to break-up the massing with dormers.

Panel Discussion:

Comment. Not a simple undertaking, critical with regard to the neighbourhood. Why not deal with the traffic problem now, all in one stage? Unsure with the architectural direction to make industrial feel primarily residential and it seems to be a retro approach.

I'm concerned with the siting of the building. Given the need for parking it may be untimely to preclude the Temple Street extension.

Traffic in the area seems to be an issue with the potential for a lot of neighbourhood impact.

There is not a lot of time to provide comment to review such a significant project. The existing buildings appear to be all in one location.

Q. What is the current traffic pattern? What are we looking at in the number of persons on the site?

A. There are currently 25 persons on site, plus a maintenance department. Approximately 100 Staff are anticipated, although many will be mostly off site.

Q. Substantial changes with regard to the traffic are needed at Bay Street and the Island Highway. Given that the School District does not feel it is possible to solve what they perceived as Parksville's traffic problem, how is this going to work?

A. Program times at Parksville Family Place are not at the same time as main traffic flows. They can still access Temple Street to Finholm Street in the future, but it does take out the main parking lot. It is a big chunk of the site (25 - 30%) and does devalue it considerably.

Q. Good access is important. Is there an opportunity for a land exchange?

A. A land exchange is not on the table, but the layout does not rule out this opportunity in the future.

Q. The old building appears to be impacting the layout?

A. It is LEED project aiming for gold. Adaptive reuse is part of the equation.

Q. There is a residential character to the building, but the scale appears to be totally different. The main face of the building on the residential side appears monolithic. It is better on the side facing the highway.

A. Good point, we can look at it in future revisions.

Comment: Site appears to be over paved maybe even to the extreme.

Q. Traffic would chop off the site and will have to use landscaping. How is security and lighting being addressed?

A. They have been addressed. It is an open site; like a school yard. However, the site is prewired for security cameras in case vandalism is more of a problem than has been anticipated. Some parts of the site, like the playground area, are fenced. Someone would have to climb over it.

Q. Is a garbage and recycling enclosure provided?

A. We are looking at it.

A. There is a berm along the northern parking area that screens the parking areas. We are also looking to incorporate bio-swales into the project. We have a landscape architect who will look at 'greening up' the landscaping, particularly along Bay Street. Along the east boundary there are some low lying areas that need to be addressed. We are looking into the capture of water from the roof.

Q. Massing of the asphalt areas seems extensive. Is there any possibility of pervious surfaces such as gravel being included?

A. We are looking at unit pavers and maybe paving only the driveway aisles. We may be looking at gravel portions or some other form of pervious surface to reduce the impact of surface parking area.

LEED requires us to design according to dark sky principles. There are two lamp posts at most under consideration. No lighting will be directed towards the nearby residences. Most of the lighting will be attached to the building.

Q. Won't it be black in the winter?

A. Lots of high up street lighting, plus the site will be used mostly during the day (it is not a typical land use).

Q. Access to the building is just at the north side?

A. No, the main access is at the north and there are also other accesses to the building. There are multiple accesses, particularly on the west side of the building. Multiple accesses to the building are important. Some clients may be from broken homes where it is desirable to have different parties use different building accesses.

Q. Are there any covered walkways? Given the coastal climate and its penchant for precipitation, young mothers with children may be exposed to the elements getting from the parking area to the main entrances.

A. There are trade-offs. We had included covered walkways there before.

Q. There are three storeys?

A. No, two storeys.

We had a covered walkway but it was removed due to cost. There are heavy cost constraints for this project. We had to cut it out to make it financially viable. One point of clarification, it should be noted that full overhangs surround the building.

Comment: The amount of asphalt is a bit much. It appears to be a huge volume.

A. We would like to reduce the size of the parking stalls.

- Comment: We have a lot of pick-up trucks here and larger vehicles in general. Wouldn't it be better to lose 1 or 2 surplus parking spaces rather than change the dimensions from existing City standards?
- A. During the preliminary designs it was clear that Staff all wanted to be able to bring cars to work. LEED provides bonus points for the elimination of 25% required parking. 86 spaces are provided, more than is anticipated to be required for the proposed use. We will be providing incentives for Staff to carpool.
- Q. Any underground parking?
- A. All surface parking.
- Q. Any of the parking covered?
- A. Too expensive and not enough of a grade change to utilize under the building.
- Comment: The Bay Avenue facade is quite harsh. There is very little articulation compared to the south side of the building.
- A. I would support revisiting the facade.
- Q. Has the City asked for any kind of traffic study, given the constraints in the area?
- A. The School District has declined. The City asked.
- Q. Is the entrance to the parking area lining up with Temple?
- A. The entry driveway is lining up with Temple Street alignment.
- Q. The other side does not appear to line-up all that great at the alignment of this driveway?
- A. We will look at the other driveway alignment and make sure it avoids shining headlights.
- Q. What is the timing on the project?
- A. Construction drawings will be ready in the fall. We are looking to submit mid to late November and tender in January.
- Q. Have you looked at moving the building towards the highway?
- A. We did look at it; however, highway noise is a consideration for the tenants.
- Q. It appears to be an untenable situation with the project having so many constraints.
- A. The LEED program is a numbers game and will not necessarily lead to great form and character. There is circulation and traffic issues to address, matching the facade treatment with the existing building, development cost charges, etc.

- A. With LEED we are endeavouring to be a better public citizen. It will be much more energy efficient. Also, it will not be increasing any storm water load. In fact, it will be less than before the development. We will be switching to low volume plumbing fixtures. We have addressed a lot given the parameters that we have been given.

There are walkways throughout the site. We will look at the massing of the parking, additional overhangs and the articulations of the northern facade. We are looking to using yellow brick pavers (ties in with Munchkin Land daycare).

The plant list is focused on native planning. Some of the hedging needs upgrading.

There is one hint of contamination from the previous use of the site that we have to address. There is an underground paint tank that was used on the site.

2. Duly Noted Comments:

The Advisory Design Panel provided the following duly noted comments on the application as follows:

- Traffic issues in the area should be considered;
- Massing and articulation of the north facade should be enhanced, south elevation is better;
- The extent of hard paved surfaces should be revisited to break up the visual mass and reduce the impervious surfaces;
- Driveways should be reconsidered to better align with cross-streets and to avoid headlight issues.

3. Recommendation:

Recommendations to Council were not provided. Development Permit application has not been made. Concerns remain that due to lack of statutory requirements, institutional proponents are not required to pursue the development permit processes. This is unacceptable if the objective is a designed community.

4. Adoption of Minutes:

Moved by L. Locke

Seconded by L. Taylor

That the minutes of the meeting of July 8, 2010 be approved.

5. New Business:

The role of the Advisory Design Panel was discussed as it relates to comments on form and character and the extent of those comments. The Advisory Design Panel asked, given the complexity of recent applications, if in advance of the meeting plans could be distributed with the agenda package. The proposed consideration of an additional panel member was also discussed. The Advisory Design Panel indicated concern that the level of detail may be beyond their scope in the review process. Staff and the Advisory Design Panel agreed to setup an orientation meeting to go over the role of the Panel and address the issues raised in more detail.

6. Adjournment:

Moved by L. Locke

Seconded by L. Taylor

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.



M. Lafoy
Chair

BR/dd

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