

ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Meeting held electronically and open to public attendance
Council Chamber, City Hall

PRESENT:

| | |
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| Mr. Ken Bourdeau | Chair, Community Member |
| Mr. Andrew Feltham | Community Member* |
| Mr. Christopher Lumsden | Community Member |
| Ms. Christa MacArthur | Community Member |
| Ms. Angel Manguerra | Community Member* |

ABSENT:

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| Ms. Anthea Darychuk | Community Member |
| Ms. Margaret Fairweather | Community Member |
| Ms. Tasha Henderson | Community Member |

GUESTS:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Vicar Richard Leggett | Holy Trinity Cathedral |
| Mr. Joe Carreira | Conwest |
| Mr. Joe Palazzo | Conwest |
| Ms. Bianca Bellini | Conwest |
| Mr. Stefan Aepli | Franci Architecture |
| Mr. Donald Luxton | Donald Luxton & Associates |
| Mr. Peter Kreuk | Durante Kruek |
| Mr. Christephen Cheng | Bunt & Associates |

STAFF PRESENT:

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| Mr. Rupinder Basi | Supervisor of Development Planning |
| Ms. Britney Dack | Senior Heritage Planner |
| Ms. Jacque Killawee | City Clerk |
| Ms. Carilyn Cook | Committee Clerk |

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ken Bourdeau, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. and recognized that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples and acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that the City is learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission agenda of December 7, 2021 be adopted as circulated, noting that Item 3.1 – Adoption of the September 21, 2021 Minutes would be addressed after Item 4.1 – Official Community Plan Amendment and Heritage Revitalization Agreement: 514 Carnarvon Street.

Carried.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 September 21, 2021

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the September 21, 2021 Advisory Planning Commission meeting be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

4. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Official Community Plan Amendment and Heritage Revitalization Agreement: 514 Carnarvon Street

Rupinder Basi, Supervisor, Development Planning, summarized the staff report dated December 7, 2021, regarding an Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment, a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA), and a Special Development Permit (SDP) application received for the Holy Trinity Cathedral

which is located at 514 Carnarvon Street. Mr. Basi reviewed details of the proposal including:

- Development approvals required;
- The OCP Amendment;
- The HRA and Housing Agreement;
- The Special Development Permit;
- Policy Alignment;
- The approval process to date; and,
- Approval process next steps.

There were no questions from the Commission at this time.

Joe Carreira of Conwest introduced himself and the project team, including Vicar Richard Leggett of the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Stefan Aepli of Franci Architecture, Donald Luxton of Donald Luxton & Associates, Peter Kruek of Durante Kruek, Christephen Cheng of Bunt & Associates, and Bianca Bellini and Joe Palazzo of Conwest. The team provided a presentation which included but was not limited to:

- The vision of the proposal and community support for the project; which began in 2014;
- Area context, view analysis, tower separation, and shadow analysis, as well as landscaping;
- Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) rationale and restoration of the building and interior; and,
- Alignment with the City's Strategic Priorities.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission receive the on-table correspondence circulated on December 1, 2021 in the agenda package and earlier in the day December 7, 2021.

Carried.

All members of the Commission present voted in favour of the motion.

In response to questions from the Commission, Messrs. Basi, Aepli, Cheng, Carreira, Palazzo, and the Venerable Richard Leggett provided the following comments:

- While the codes for seismic upgrades are constantly changing, the planned upgrade to the building would ensure that everyone would be able to exit

the building safely in the event of an earthquake. Currently, the building is in extremely weak condition from a lateral point of view;

- The two and three bedroom units are defined as family friendly, a definition used throughout the Lower Mainland, and this proposal exceeds the city's minimal requirements for family friendly units;
- The transportation subsidies will be for a limited time and secured through a legal agreement with the intent of providing an incentive for residents to use the SkyTrain and, hopefully, continue to use it even once the subsidies end. This is a new initiative for the city and a part of new transportation demand strategies;
- Cyclists will have direct access to the parkade on Clarkson Street and an elevator which will allow bikes to get up to the Carnarvon Street level to connect to the secondary bike route;
- Consideration can be made to install a bicycle runnel up the staircase so that cyclists can make less use of the elevator;
- Use of the community hall by various groups would be secured through the HRA and include comprehensive zoning and uses of the site and, while it is not in the city's policy to count it as an amenity, the level of commitment to providing space for community groups from the church is longstanding and will continue;
- The current walkway from Carnarvon Street to Clarkson Street, is located on private property, would remain publically accessible through a right of way covenant;
- There are plans for the SkyTrain Station to be updated with access to be provided through the neighboring property at 420 Carnarvon to the ground floor of the SkyTrain Station;
- The public passageway was designed in a way to minimize stairs and to make the upper portion from Clarkson Street to the south end of the new structure as level as possible, or with gentle ramping for accessibility;
- Once complete, those accessing food programs at the facility with strollers, etc., will not have to negotiate the grade to get to the large and open area;
- Discussions will take place with food service partners to assist in facilitating the continuation of the food security and resources hub during the construction period;
- The memorial garden, which many Anglican churches have for cremains, will be located at the east zone of the property and will likely be gated;
- Great consideration was made with respect to the buildings on both sides of the Church and, as such, the outdoor residential areas have been placed to create as much distance as possible between the Church and the heritage home;
- Infrastructure for Level Two electronic vehicle (EV) charging stations will be installed for all residential parking spaces, which is outlined in the Zoning Bylaw and in line with best practices;

- Costs of the EV chargers is dependent on which charging stations are chosen from the options available;
- Just over 200 parking spaces will be provided, amounting to less than one parking space per unit;
- Much more detailed design work has been completed since the 2018 iteration of the proposal;
- It was very disappointing to not receive funding from BC Housing's Community Housing Fund for the affordable housing aspect of the project; however, the new plans meet the city's family-friendly guidelines and will create income to fund Church operations;
- The pro forma submitted to the city is based on what is being shared today; the 2018 pro forma included the funding from BC Housing; however, that was funding was not realized;
- The restoration and community hall will be paid for by the church as outlined in the economic analysis; and,
- The community benefit through the policy is the heritage restoration of the cathedral, the public elevator, the plaza, and the pedestrian walkway through the site.

Commission members provided the following comments:

- The parish has a good track record for sharing their hall with community groups;
- In the future, the strata could challenge public access to the elevator and walkway from Carnarvon Street to Clarkson Street;
- With respect to parking and EV charging stations, some residents of the development may not want a car at all given the available car shares and nearby SkyTrain station; and,
- Substantial changes to the market and affordable rental units from the initial 2018 proposal are very disappointing and concerning.

The Chair called for speakers from the public.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all speakers are residents of New Westminster.

Garey Carlson, HUB Cycling, advised of the importance of the 514 Carnarvon Street site to the cycling network, noting that Carnarvon Street is the ideal route to get riders from Uptown to Downtown. He stated that this redevelopment would provide opportunities to address the pinch points near the church and fulfill both the city's Master Transportation Plan and the Downtown Transportation plan as well as helping to achieve the bold initiatives the city committed to meeting. Mr. Carlson requested that the sidewalk be located closer to the church so that space in the area could be used for the creation of a bike lane.

Carla Jones shared her support for the project noting that she resides in the Downtown near the church and is a member of the parish. Ms. Jones advised that as a parish volunteer at the church, she has seen firsthand the outreach done, and noted that a church represents more than the faith of those that worship there; it is a community hub which is utilized by a plethora of organizations. She stated the project will create more much needed community space and a safer path to the SkyTrain Station.

Ray Murphy advised that he resides next door to the property and is in support of the project. He noted that he often uses the passageway which it is dark and has trip hazards, and that the community area is used a lot for a variety of events; however, the new plaza will provide a place for people to gather other than out on the street. Mr. Murphy stated that the narrow design of the project will allow more light to reach his home and that the development will clean up the area.

MOVED AND SECONDED

***THAT** the Advisory Planning Commission provide the opportunity for additional first time speakers.*

Carried.

All members of the Commission present voted in favour of the motion.

Jacque Killawee, City Clerk, provided instructions as to how those who wished to speak could join the meeting.

The Chair called for additional speakers and none were present.

In response to questions from the Commission, Messrs. Basi, Aepli, Cheng, Carreira, Palazzo, and the Venerable Richard Leggett provided the following comments:

- With respect to addressing the cycling pinch point, the challenge comes with the historical aspect of the site and the grade change; therefore, it is proposed to work with the existing cycling stream and improve the site in various ways in consideration of the building and property line;
- The housing agreement will be in place for the life of the building; and,
- Discussion with the Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem First Nations regarding the housing aspect of the project can be undertaken. It is noted, however, that the Qayqayt First Nations have been contacted but not yet met with, and conversations have been held with the Kwikwetlem First Nations but not about housing;

- In the previous application the vision was for 42 units of non-market rental units as well as at least 13 units of market rental housing, the former to be owned by the HTC Housing Society, the latter by the HTC Foundation; however, when BC Housing announced in June 2021 that they would not be funding the non-market rental housing, a revised application was prepared which has subsequently reviewed by the Land Use Planning Committee and the Advisory Planning Commission. The revised application included 14 units of market rental units to be owned by the HTC Foundation; and,
- The purpose of the 14 market rental units was, as it had been in the previous application, to provide a revenue stream (i) to ensure that the Cathedral, a heritage building, would have sufficient funding to maintain its fabric and (ii) to ensure that the Parish could continue to subsidize the use of our facilities by First Nations and community groups. These groups do not pay market rental rates for the facilities and, in some cases, pay rates below the actual cost to operate the Hall and/or Cathedral.

Commission members provided the following comments:

- This is a unique opportunity to address the pinch point issue for cyclists;
- The project is well thought out and the connection of Carnarvon Street and Columbia Street, along with the restoration of the cathedral, is great;
- The project is aggressive for an OCP amendment where a rezoning application may be sufficient;
- Earlier iterations of the project, when BC Housing was presumed to be involved, were better;
- The tower aligns and works well with the church and architecture;
- Future use of the elevator and publicly accessible but privately owned space is concerning and more robust protection of the use of these areas should be in place to avoid future challenges;
- Talks could take place with the Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem First Nations regarding the possible provision of below market units to them or to receive first priority for the rental units as this would go further towards reconciliation than signs, etc., and this could be included in the housing agreement;
- The preservation of the church is vital to the community and it would be a loss if it were not preserved;
- The proposed public space and connectivity would be an improvement over what is currently there;
- The affordable housing benefits are disappointing and the proponent could look into other ways to fund and provide affordable housing on site through CMHC and other programs offered through BC Housing;
- The church, which was very involved in the colonization of Canada, must do more for reconciliation;

- Provision of more affordable housing options is preferred over public realm improvement;
- The public realm improvements are critically important for the neighbourhood as is the housing. The restoration of the church is using a lot of funds which could be invested in housing, etc., and it does not seem that good value will be received for the seismic upgrading;
- This project provides density in the right spot with the various options for transportation available;
- The applicant could pull back on aspects of the project to address the housing issue;
- Any market units are good in new development even a small percentage and the addition of the pathway is a big contribution to the community; and,
- The city could revisit the possibility of widening Carnarvon Street as part of the site development.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission recommend that Council does not support the Official Community Plan Amendment application for 514 Carnarvon Street due to the lack of sufficient amenities, particularly market and non-market rental units.

Defeated.

Four members of the Commission voted in opposition of the motion.

Commission members considered the following motion and amendment:

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission recommend that Council support the Official Community Plan Amendment application for 514 Carnarvon Street and request that Council direct staff to pursue further discussions with the developer regarding affordability of the proposed market and non-market rental units as well as protection mechanisms for the privately owned amenities spaces which are proposed, prior to the final adoption of the Heritage Revitalization Bylaw and the Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw.

Amended.

AMENDMENT MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the following be added to the motion:

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission requests that Council direct staff to reconsider the possibility of creating cycling facilities in front of the development as part of the redesign of the site.

Carried.

One member of the Commission voted in opposition.

The amendment having carried, the motion as amended was put:

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission recommend that Council support the Official Community Plan Amendment application for 514 Carnarvon Street and request that Council direct staff to pursue further discussions with the developer regarding the affordability of the proposed market and non-market rental units as well as protection mechanisms for the privately owned amenities spaces which are proposed, prior to the final adoption of the Heritage Revitalization Bylaw and the Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw;

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission requests that Council direct staff to reconsider the possibility of creating cycling facilities in front of the development as part of the redesign of the site.

Defeated.

Three Commission members voted in opposition.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission support the proposal for 514 Carnarvon Street.

Carried.

Two Commission members voted in opposition.

Following additional discussion, the Commission members agreed to reconsider the previous motion.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission supports the proposal at 514 Carnarvon Street and requests that Council and staff continue to work with the developer with respect to:

- The affordability of the proposed dwelling units;
- Legal security regarding the proposed publicly accessible but privately owned spaces; and,
- Adjacent cycling infrastructure.

Carried.

One member voted in opposition of the motion.

Procedural note: At 8:53 p.m., the Commission passed the following motion to recess the meeting for a five minute break:

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission meeting recess for five minutes prior to addressing the balance of agenda items.

Carried.

All members of the Commission present voted in favour of the motion.

Procedural note: Upon resumption of the meeting at 8:57 p.m., Item 3.1 – Adoption of the September 21, 2021 minutes was addressed.

4.2 Heritage Revitalization Agreement Policy Refresh Principles

Britney Dack, Senior Heritage Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Heritage Revitalization Refresh Program that was launched in the summer by Council to update the previous policy that was written in 2011. Ms. Dack's presentation outlined the following:

- Definition of a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA);
- Goals of the Refresh Project;
- Development options available through the current program; and,
- Proposed community amenities to be considered in the Refresh Project.

In response to questions from Commission members, Ms. Dack provided the following comments:

- The rental principle of the policy is intended to ensure that the number of rental units on site should not decrease as part of an application; however there may be situations where the provision of other community incentives such as green building, streetscape upgrades, servicing upgrades, etc., could offset units and would be considered by Council as an exception to the policy;
- Owners evicting tenants prior to applying for an HRA would fall primarily under the jurisdiction of the Province; however, the city would look to the authority of the BC Residential Tenancy Branch and the Province for support to address these issues as they arise; and,

- The benefit of having an HRA is the zoning agreement which would include rental provisions, and which would allow enforcement two ways to protect rental units but fall under one bylaw.

A Commission member noted that the answer to what a community benefit is may be dependent on what one's demographic is since for many infill projects, it is more about the additional units and not so much about the heritage home. The community benefit realized, whether it be additional housing or preservation, may depend on how secure one is with their won housing situation.

5. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

6. UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 18, 2022

7. END OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 9.23 pm

Original Signed

Andrew Hull, Chair

Original Signed

Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk