

October 10, 2017

Re: REZ00525, 1201 Fort Street/1050 Pentrelew Place
CALUC Community Meeting, September 12, 2017

Dear Mayor and Council:

Approximately 85 neighbours attended this second CALUC Meeting, and by far the majority spoke out against the revised proposal brought forward by Abstract Developments.

It would not be exaggerating to say that people were distraught that the proponent had paid so little attention to the concerns expressed at the first CALUC Meeting. The new proposal appeared to have largely ignored the significant revisions requested in council's motion at the April 6/17 CotW, specifically

- a. Massing, height, and setbacks of buildings with attention to the look and feel of buildings A and B from the point of view of Pentrelew Place,
- c. Removal of roof decks on the townhouse units,
- e. more breathing room, less wall-like feel ... to the townhouses.

Further, there was annoyance that minor expressions of interest (for example, the pathway) expressed in "neighbourhood consultations" had been hijacked to become bargaining chips to justify the mass and height of all of the buildings.

The project remains essentially the same. In some ways, it is even larger than the original proposal, as it now entails 94 units rather than the 91 originally proposed.

While building B has been reduced by one storey and a more sensitive transition to the lower density of the south has been somewhat accommodated in the revised plan, the overall massing remains the same, with an FSR of 1.39:1, slightly more than the 1.379:1 originally proposed. The total floor area is slightly larger than the originally proposed at 10,810sq m., now at 10,888 sq. m.

The project is no less dense. The massing is no less than originally proposed. The issue of height has not been addressed in Tower A, which remains at six storeys and 21.42 meters. It is important to note that the OCP seems to allow for up to six storeys in strategic locations, but there has been no discussion of the strategic value of this site. Are six storeys appropriate along entire corridors? Is a bus route the sole criteria of "strategic"?

Of equal, if not greater exasperation for the neighbours, is the townhouse height along Pentrelew, where, although the unit number has dropped, the height has increased consistently. From 10.23 m. to 10.86 m. in Building C; from 10.74 m. to 11.42 m. in Building C and from 10.73 m. to 11.34 m. in Building D. The completely reasonable concern of residents is that they do not feel there is a sensitive transition from the west side of Pentrelew to the east. The current R1-B zoning allows for 7.6 m. and the consensus is that an abrupt 50% increase of this to 11+ meters is too much. The neighbours think the current plan offers a wall-like feel of town houses with minimal front yard setbacks looming directly across the street from the one and two storey homes of the R1-B zoning.

Contrary to the CotW motion, the roof top decks of the original proposal have morphed into third floor terraces with the same potential for overlook to the condo to the north and continue to pave the way for other intrusive decks in future development.

It was generally expressed that the development as proposed does not address the objectives of OCP DPA 7B (Heritage Corridors), to

- 4 (a) improve the pedestrian experience
- (b) conserve the features and characteristics of this area
- (c) achieve a more cohesive design, and enhance appearance ... responsive to its historic context through sensitive and innovative interventions.

Blasting, soil disruption and drainage are problems, including the potential for damages to adjacent and historic properties farther away. Perhaps the blasting should be overseen by a professional engineer, as in West Vancouver, where this appears to have significantly reduced property damage. The issue of blasting and the survival of the few remaining protected trees was again raised, and a blasting plan that takes them into consideration was promised. The neighbours received assurance that storm water management will be addressed on site and it is important that this be followed up with diligence.

While an affordable housing component has now been promised, there was displeasure that it did not specifically address additional housing in the immediate neighborhood.

Again, the traffic impact of a vehicular influx from 90+ home owners was raised. This development is considered to be a precursor of development along the Fort Street corridor, yet the question of the cumulative effect of density has not been adequately considered. The City's claim that the traffic on Fort Street is decreasing was greeted with skepticism.

There remains considerable anger that significant trees, Sequoia, Beech and English Oak, with historic attributes will be destroyed to accommodate the proposed density. In this latest proposal, yet another iconic Garry Oak is being removed.

This proposal received criticism equal to the first. As one contributor summarized, “There are no benefits or major enhancements in this plan, and the quiet liveable community would be changed forever.” Another asked what compromises Abstract had made for the community. Another said, “We don’t want more tweaks, but a total re-think.” And yet another: “You have externalized the cost to the community and internalized the benefits for yourself.”

There was negligible neighbourhood support for the project Abstract Developments currently proposes. In view of the fact work on Rockland’s LAP was slated to begin this fall, now is clearly not the time to be considering such extraordinary deviations from the existing zoning.

Sincerely,

Janet Simpson, President

