

Justin Gammon recused himself from Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00078 for 945 Pembroke Street at 1:22 pm.

3.2 Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00078 for 945 Pembroke Street

The City is considering a Rezoning and Development Permit with Variances Application to construct two multiple dwellings.

Applicant meeting attendees:

CHRISTINE LINTOTT
LAURIE AVES

CHRISTINE LINTOTT ARCHITECTS
CHRISTINE LINTOTT ARCHITECTS

Ms. Taylor provided the Panel with a brief introduction of the Application and the areas that Council is seeking advice on, including the following:

- the on-site hard and soft landscaping
- the residential entryways
- the east-facing windows of building A.

Ms. Aves provided the Panel with a detailed presentation of the site and context of the proposal as well as details of the proposed landscape plan.

Questions of clarification were asked by the Panel on the following:

- how are the units accessed, and what is the purpose of the central stairway?
 - each unit has its own entrance, and the central stairway is used only as an emergency exit
- if a resident of unit A3 parked a vehicle in the rear, would they then walk up the driveway to enter to through the front?
 - yes
- are all the existing trees on the western property line located on the adjacent property?
 - yes, all are on the neighbour's lot except one cedar, which will have to be removed for the installation of utilities
- are the bicycle racks at the front for visitors?
 - they are for visitors or residents, for use as short-term bike parking
- will the buildings be stratified?
 - yes, each unit will be in the strata
- how will parking access be ensured for both buildings?
 - a reciprocal easement will be made for the parking and patio areas
- is the only access to units 4 and 6 in buildings A and B through the easement?
 - yes
- will the driveway between the buildings be a shared path for vehicles and pedestrians?
 - yes
- how was the placement of the battens and windows determined, and were other arrangements considered?
 - the windows are aligned so as to reduce overlook into adjacent dwellings, and the battens are aligned to the windows in many locations; however, the battens' alignment differs at the top of the east elevation to accommodate the interior room configuration

- what is the separation distance between the buildings?
 - just over 4m for the most part, and a little closer at the emergency exit
- what is the height of the sill where the separation distance is 4m?
 - the sill heights are quite high, at approximately 4'6" or 5', to ensure that the view is towards the ceiling rather than inside the unit
 - the window placement and room arrangement are also staggered to ensure privacy across the driveway
- was increasing the separation distance or decreasing the height of the living room windows considered to maximize privacy?
 - one of the living room windows faces the neighbours, and across the driveway the high sill heights and staggered window placement reduces views into the living rooms
- are there specific design guidelines that prescribed the direction for this project, or is the intent to maintain the residential character of the neighbourhood?
 - the intent was for the proposal to fit in to the neighbourhood, similar to the existing dwelling
- would the site's zone allow for greater density on the property?
 - Ms. Taylor clarified that the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) supports up to five storeys and a floor space ratio (FSR) of up to 2:1, and the zoning supports multi-family dwellings
- why are variances sought when the proposal includes a rezoning application?
 - Ms. Taylor clarified that the Application is to rezone to the existing R3-A1 Zone, as the proposal fits well in terms of the proposed use and density
 - the proposal provides more open site space, some reduced setbacks and greater site coverage than the R3-A1 Zone
- is the Senior Heritage Planner supportive of the move to mimic heritage façades?
 - Ms. Taylor clarified that staff have collectively reviewed the Application to ensure the proposal's consistency with design guidelines and its fit within the surrounding context.

Panel members discussed:

- concern for the liveability of the dwellings and the proposal's method of achieving density
- opportunity to explore alternate ways of achieving density while respecting the neighbouring dwellings; for example, by reducing the number of units and by building just one building on the lot
- desire to have the overall site plan and the buildings' presence as single family dwellings reconsidered, to add to the neighbourhood and achieve liveability
- need to reconsider the buildings' appeal to traditional typology while achieving multiple dwellings
- recognition of the significant potential for the site and its central location adjacent to Central Park
- concern for the reduced setbacks from the R3-A1 Zone, which would have helped to ensure liveability of the proposal and neighbouring dwellings
- appreciation for the effort invested into the window placement; however, the façade design needs refinement; some privacy concerns remain for the adjacency of the windows
- the emergency exit's location through bathrooms demonstrates the need to improve the site circulation
- the site plan's incongruity with the context as a pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood

- the need to simplify the site plan
- the proposal's lack of shared space on-site
- the need to improve the design of the tall, narrow laneway between buildings to eliminate potential for conflict between pedestrians and cars
- safety concerns with the parking located at the rear and unit entrances located only at the front of the buildings
- appreciation for the look of the concrete and grass laneway, but space must be provided for pedestrians to pass cars
- the need to review the proposed grass planting in laneway given the wet, shady conditions
- drainage concerns arising from the basement suite entrances' low grade
- concern for the proximity of the parking spaces to neighbouring dwellings, as well as adjacent units 6 in buildings A and B
- lack of space between vehicles in laneway and entrances
- concern for the cheap material selections and suburban-looking elevations
- lack of clarity as to why the Tudor reference was chosen
- caution against mimicking heritage aspects, as this takes away from the look of the adjacent buildings
- opportunity to explore a more contemporary design to better highlight the heritage features of neighbouring buildings.

Motion:

It was moved by Deborah LeFrank, seconded by Jason Niles, that the Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00078 for 945 Pembroke Street does not sufficiently meet the applicable design guidelines and polices and should be declined, and that the key areas that should be revised include:

- improvement of the overall liveability of the proposal with particular attention to the interior and exterior site circulation and building separation distances
- reconsideration of the overall building expression to limit the replication of heritage façades.

Carried Unanimously

Justin Gammon returned to the meeting at 2:20 pm.