

1475 Fort Street CALUC Community Meeting
September 9, 2020

Attending:

Josh Hayes, (JH) Lantern Properties Ltd.
Peter Johannknecht, (PJ) Cascadia Architects Inc.
Chris Windjeck, (CW) Landscape

Bob June (BJ) RNA

Sophi Perndl. (SP) Pooni Group, Facilitator

Preamble:

JH Project requires a certain number of units to make it work economically.
VIHA leases/leased both 1471 and 1475 as Transition Housing.
The expectation is VIHA will occupy 1475 Fort again when completed.
VIHA will not sign a contract until a building is completed

PJ The discussion with VIHA remains ongoing about renting this building

Questions (abbreviated) :

1. Will you provide us with a copy of the letter you sent to residents inviting them to a open house?

JH. A copy will be forwarded to Bob June, RNA, following the meeting.

2. When can we see the affidavit listing the homeowners purportedly receiving the invitation?

JH. I did not agree to send an affidavit.

I will have our manager provide the list and a statement of deliveries.

3. Why did it take Lantern Properties almost 7 months from the March 5th meeting to provide reader accessible hard copies of plans?

JH. Plans where being updated and changes made.

BJ. There was no mention of what changes or updates.

4. Why did Lantern ignore the May 10th. enquiry from the Strata President of 949 Pemberton? Why did they not meet their obligation to consult and inform?

JH/PJ Plans needed to be funneled to one source.

Development Permits do not require consultation

They felt they build consultation over time. They do see the value of consultation.

The biggest disconnect was with 949 Pemberton

Let's see what we can do to make it better.

Lets work together to make it better.

5. Why did you select the least interactive online option, which does not allow participants to speak or see each other?

SP Anything online has limitations.
Pooni Group works across Canada and we have found this technology is the most productive

Variance Related Questions:

1. The cumulative of the variances is beyond excessive. Why do you feel that attempting to violate the zoning bylaws to such a degree is justified?
PJ. Higher standards and higher costs require higher rental prices to provide density.
If not higher, then wider.
Trees are sacrificed to give parking
Considering increasing soil volumes over the parking to provide larger plantings
JH The occupancy count of the new building will be up to VIHA and if they put 2 occupants per bedroom.

Participants Question – How is this format suitable?

SP Pooni Group feel ZOOM is unproductive and undemocratic and non interactive.

BJ There was no opportunity for discussion with the attendees

5. Please explain how Cascadia defines “sensitive transition” when the proposed building will tower over the neighboring properties in such close proximity?

PJ Only three floors are visible to neighbors. It does not tower.

The transition is sensitive.

It is in the eyes of the beholder.

That is harder for some to see than others.

The Advisory Design Panel said it was less of an issue as it is to the north (of 949 Pemberton)

JH We looked at building without variances but it is not affordable economically.

Lantern Properties lost one unit because of right of way on property.

PJ Looked at a smaller building with outside parking but internal/underground parking is required by the city.

Participant Question – The Advisory Design Panel did not address massing?

PJ The ADP focus on exterior design. Not on massing.

The ADP minutes are a high level summary and not detailed minutes.

SP The nuances are not reflected in the minutes.

Participant Question – How is this design sensitive to the Townhomes to the south (949 Pemberton)?

PJ It is a matter of opinion that it is not

This plan is similar to setbacks in other parts of the city.

There are 300 sites in the city of 3 storey apartment with less than 7 m. setbacks.

There are ways to discuss height with the team. He will propose the remove the Parapet.

There is a willingness to make changes.

We recognize there are a lot of valid concerns.

Those who live locally have a stronger connection.

It's up to Council to make the final decision.

6. Why do you think you have the right to violate the clearly stated guidelines for protecting neighbors privacy?

JH We don't think we have the right to take away privacy.
We are mitigating it.

PJ There will be impacts on the neighbors.
The townhouses have a view into the apartments
The living rooms in the two bedroom units look east and west away from neighbors windows.
There are perforated screens for neighbors privacy on the two bedroom unit balconies to prevent views to the south.

He has additional proposals?

The one bedroom unit Juliette balconies give a sense of the outdoors without being outside.

They could change the glass in the lower portion of the Juliette window to make them more obscure to lessen the overlook.

Participants Question. Did you visit the 949 Pemberton to see the context.

JH I did not attend the site to see the context.

PJ I did not attend the site

PJ It is 25 ft. window to window

Participants Question – SP Lack of size has been covered.

Community Engagement

Participants Question – SP Why this large project rather than condominiums (?)

JH Condo's deliver an immediate profit on their sale.
This project will benefit the community with VIHA potentially renting.

PJ In the bigger picture Lantern Properties have to reinvest for a significantly longer period with rental returns.
This is a benefit to the larger community.

JH We are willing to modify the plans
The plans will be different when we go back to COTW

PJ We started planning changes after the first COTW and will go back with a new plan

Participants Question – Why did you not contact 949 Pemberton

JH We do meetings with neighborhoods, not individuals

Participants Question – SP What are the rents?

JH Financials are kept internal
Many variables can affect rents. We do not have that data today.

Question chain lost

JH VIHA may return might return as tenant when the apartment is built.

PJ there is not parking at grade

Participants Question - SP Why did you not make Changes earlier?

PJ we take our direction from the Proponent, Lantern Properties.

We are happy to meet with anyone.

JH The Advisory Design Panel was very supportive

He felt no changes where necessary

Now, after the COTW, they hope to build a proposal that address the neighborhood.

Tree Removal

1. Why does Lantern Properties build a LEED green, energy efficient environmental friendly building?

PJ LEED has been replaced somewhat by the BC Step Code standards. LEED is a dinosaur.

Step Code is now becoming the industry standard.

The building will be to Step # 3 with energy efficient Heat Pump, HVAC.

The roof is reserved for Solar Energy installation and electric car charging in the future.

JH The building is energy efficient with low flow toilets, LED lighting and green landscaping.

PJ Low VOC which is now standard.

2. If zoning by-law set backs where adhered to, couldn't the trees be saved?

PJ The trees and the parkade are fighting each other.

If you do not densify the city the surrounding area suffers, Langford expands.

We recognize the urban forest is important.

JH The underground parking causes the tree loss.

CW Large open paved lot surface creates more heat

The proposed landscape Maple trees will grow larger than if they where in a open parking lot.

Participants Question – SP if the parkade is smaller could trees be saved?

PJ No. The site is not big. We have to have meet certain minimum stalls and bike and recycling rooms for the city.

We do not take trees down likely. We do care

3. Will Lantern Properties propose a structure that does not result in Tree's destruction?

SP - similar to previous question

PJ This is the same as the last question.

Look at all the trees that came down in the last 50 years. (to build Victoria)

4. Why is there no study of tree removal to ground and storm water management?

PJ The arborist report, parks and geo-technical report will all be reviewed

5. What guarantees are given to off-site trees survival?

JH Lantern will take all necessary steps

PJ It is required there is a tree preservation plan for neighboring trees.

6. Does Lantern Properties believe new trees per the arborist report replace exiting mature trees?

CW The arborist and the city will review the planting schedule.

Participants Question –SP Is there a 2 for 1 replacement rule.

CW. They are replacing the trees on site on a 1:1 basis because of the low soil volume available on site. (underground parking)
The city of Victoria offers the option of cash in lieu of trees or offsite planting in public areas.

Participants Question – SP Trees are completely expendable

PJ Trees have value, of course they have value
SP There are trade off's

Participants Questions – SP New Trees?

PJ May be able to put in new trees on the east side.
Might be able to increase soil volume above parkade and put in larger trees
Anything more would require a lot of changes and revisions by Lantern.

Participants Question - Trees along St. Charles?

JH We will take the necessary steps to protect trees and see they survive.
PJ There is a pre preservation plan for all neighbors trees and they are protected with a snow fence,.

Participants Question – SP Why does Lantern Properties not take into account privacy of neighbors.

SP We are discussing that today and looking at options for improving privacy

8. What plans are in place to mitigate or compensate for damage?

JH Lantern Properties will make anyone whole if damages are made.
PJ They will work with neighbors.

9. Is lantern Properties going to do the right thing for the neighborhood, neighborhood, and bird habitat?

JH ADP passed project unanimously which reflects integrity of the projects.
There is no requirement for an Ornithologist report.

10. What is your companies philosophy with respect to people and nature?

JH Lantern properties has provided rental housing for over 50 years.
We are spending money which requires a long term view.
SP Rental is a long term investment
JH Spent \$250,000. Landscaping our apartment at 1471 Fort Street.
PJ Look at the Cascadia website to see the quality of our design.
Even with bare and raw emotions at the start designs end well.
We truly believe the built environment benefits.

Miscellaneous Questions.

1. Has Lantern Properties considered refurbishing the existing building?

JH. We looked at the existing building and it needs to come down.
PJ The Fire Department is pleased to see it come down. It has no sprinklers
It is correct the old building is substandard.

2. Why has Lantern Properties not prepared drawings or pictures from the neighbor's perspective?
PJ We prepared views in a true perspective. The neighbors did so themselves.

3. Please provide evidence a smaller structure respecting zoning bylaws, neighbors privacy is not viable.

JH Financials are private. Developer does not make public financial disclosure, an industry standard.

PJ The property owner has the right to develop within the boundaries of the zoning

Participants Question – SP If project is declined what will Lantern do?

JH We have not considered that.

We are focusing on the current phase.

Additional Comments from Proponents re Engagement:

JH The city does not have a clear process for public engagement (on Development Permit) Peter/Cascadia is following direction. It is a Lantern Project.
Lantern's best interest is to get back to the city ASAP.
Possibly in 2 months.

PJ Any change costs money

JH Economics did not allow the four affordable units originally shown.

PJ Parking affected the affordable units.

Why would VIHA consider renting apartment units designed for higher end market with high ceilings?

JH VIHA only looks at rental cost per unit.
Ceiling heights are incidental

PJ 9 ft. ceiling height is now standard.

They have discussed shaving ceiling heights.

High ceilings space demand for positive HVAC ducting in corridors.

8' 6" in unit/7'6 in corridor is possible but 9' allows for future requirement.

JH VIHA does not have a lot of options.

They will welcome this option with open arms and are likely to take up option
Particularly with 2 bedroom units.

JH VIHA's lease with Lantern Properties would be confidential.